VOLUME 55
No. 6

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE
S. S. McCLURE, *Editor*
KENNETH W. PAYNE, *Managing Editor*

AUGUST
1923

The Island of Lost Pearls

Mystery, Romantic Love and a Search for Pirate's Loot Somewhere East of Suez

By Morgan Johnson

Illustrations by O. F. Schmidt

"I see Fong-Lo lying floor. He dead. Knife stick in chest'

THE mercury was leaping up the thermometer, and the courthouse seemed a veritable inferno of heat. The Resident Magistrate flicked irritably at the flies with his cow-tail switch. His tired eyes glinted through their spectacles as he passed the throng in review: lounging, duck-clad pearlers, waiting mostly for their cases of "runaways" to be heard; a bloated Japanese diver whose face looked utterly dissipated, but was only seared by the mark which the thirty-fathom limit sets upon his kind; Chinese, Cingalese, Manilamen—all the conglomeration of races which haunts a pearling field.

His gaze returned to the sullen Malay awaiting sentence in the dock. "The charge against you is proven, Mata Ali," he snapped, poising a pen. "Sentenced to three months' hard labor for breaking contract with the lugger *Water Sprite*. Next case!"

The clerk of the Court signaled wearily to the warder, clad in white duck.

"Bruce Coverdale!" The voice of the usher droned the name through the stifling room.

Swaying and catching unsteadily at the rails, a white man entered the dock. Apathetically he allowed his eyes to rove over the sea of faces. The effects of the opium the night before had not worn off; he put a hand up to his spinning head.

The first witness—slitted, diamond eyes fixed unwinkingly upon the magistrate—tucked his long-clawed hands into his capacious sleeves, and gave his evidence. His singsong words were translated tonelessly at intervals by the court interpreter.

"I am Ah Sing, attendant in the sleeping house of Song-Li. Last night about nine o'clock white man in dock come in. He ask for bunk. I tell him charge one shilling and he pay. At ten o'clock he call, say no can sleep and ask for opium. I tell him one shilling and he pay. I give him pipe. I see Fong-Lo sitting next bunk. He smoke allesame. No one else in sleeping house. About twelve o'clock I hear scleam allesame woman. I run. I see Fong-Lo lying floor. He dead. Knife stick in chest here. White man he stand floor allesame dlunk. He shout, he swear, he laugh allesame jackass. I call Song-Li. He come along Mr. Gonsalez. By'n-by police he come."

The voices lapsed into silence. A policeman came forward and proffered a knife. The R. M. took it and examined it closely.

"A Chinese knife!" he observed drily, thought for a moment, and then nodded.

"Next witness—Mr. Gonsalez," he ordered. "Let Ah Sing stand down!"

A big man, calm and unhurried, came into the court. For all his bulk, however, he trod softly like some great padded animal. His skin was a curious dead white. His gray eyes—almost slate-like in color—lent an incongruous, puzzling touch to his appearance. Indeed, Juan Gonsalez, with his soft manners, velvet voice and lazy glance, provided a baffling riddle to most in Roebuck Bay.

Saluting the magistrate politely, he took his place.

"You were in Song-Li's house at twelve o'clock last night?" questioned the R. M. abruptly.

"I was," agreed Mr. Gonsalez, softly.

"You were summoned by Ah Sing into the sleeping quarters? You were there with Song-Li?"

"That is correct." Mr. Gonsalez's broad, white face was expressionless.

"What did you see?"

"I saw a dead Chinaman—not an uncommon sight in those——"

"Confine yourself to facts, Mr. Gonsalez!" snapped the harassed R. M. "Any observations necessary will be made by me!"

Unmoved, the witness gently shrugged his big shoulders.

"The dead man had been knifed," he continued smoothly. "He was lying face upward upon the matting——"

"Where was the prisoner?" rapped out the R. M.

Gonsalez's eyebrows crept slowly up.

"Why, asleep in his bunk," he said, "under the effects of opium."

"Upon your oath, Mr. Gonsalez?"

"Upon my oath!" repeated the big man, with quiet insistence.

Puzzled, the R. M. rested his aching head in his hands. He was just recovering from a particularly bad bout of dengue. Either Gonsalez or Ah Sing was lying; the problem was which? Gonsalez was a power in Roebuck Bay. He owned a fleet of pearling luggers and a spacious bungalow in the best part of the town. There were rumors—but impatiently the R. M. dismissed these from his mind. Large experience with Chinamen, on the other hand, had taught him distrust. He felt that he must lean toward Gonsalez.

HE waved Gonsalez down, and Song-Li, the owner of the doss house, took his place, to corroborate Gonsalez's evidence in every detail.

The R. M. turned with abrupt decision to the apathetic, half-dazed figure in the dock.

"Prisoner, owing to the conflicting evidence, you are discharged. Warder arrest Ah Sing for the murder of Fong-Lo!"

Inscrutable, exhibiting all the fatalistic calm of his race, Ah Sing stretched out his scraggy wrists for the handcuffs. His slitted eyes seemed to flit for a moment to Gonsalez, and then wandered indifferently away.

In the body of the Court, speculation ran rife.

"Bunkum!" drawled a long, sun-scorched pearler. "Gonsalez's up to his tricks—codded the old R. M. up to the nines! Mark my words, Everett, that skunk Gonsalez is too clever by half!"

"WHAT the devil am I to do?"

Bruce Coverdale forlornly descended the sun-scorched steps of the courthouse. The miasma was slowly lifting from his drugged brain. As he paused upon the sidewalk a "buggy" drew up and a smooth voice from above spoke his name.

Looking up, he saw the bleached face of Juan Gonsalez, and beside him in the driving seat the slim form of a girl. Under a floppy panama her eyes scanned him with interest. There was a wistful, appealing quality about the piquant face and frank gaze which irresistibly attracted Coverdale, even in his despondent mood.

Gonsalez, meanwhile, had leaped to the sand with the lightness of a great cat. His hand cupped the other's elbow with a friendly pressure

"Right!" snapped Coverdale, as he sprawled on the beach. "Find the pearls yourself. I'll

until, awakening to Coverdale's sustained gaze, he smiled and waved a lazy introduction between the two.

"Beryl, this is Mr. Coverdale—my daughter! Don't wait, my dear; perhaps I shall be able to persuade our friend to come back to 'chow' tonight. Now, Coverdale, join me at Jimmy's in celebrating your happy release!"

COVERDALE hesitated, frowning; a profound dislike of this big, strange individual at his side surged over him.

"Also," continued Gonsalez, with suave courtesy, "I shall be glad of your opinion upon a couple of pearls I possess."

Coverdale's lips whitened, and both fists clenched spasmodically.

"Thanks," he said shortly, "but I'm afraid I'm no judge of pearls!"

Mr. Gonsalez chuckled easily. "Don't think me rude, Coverdale, but that's a stock formula here. We all say it. I'm afraid"—the lazy, slate-gray eyes narrowed a shade—"I'm afraid you're just a little bit of a fraud!"

With an irritable gesture Coverdale shook his arm free, but walked on apathetically beside the man.

"You're making a mistake, Gonsalez!" he warned in a low, suppressed voice.

Halfway down the straggling main street stood a bungalow with broad veranda. This was Jimmy's Bar—renowned from Thursday Island to Shark's Bay for its bad liquor and famous "deals."

Gonsalez, avoiding the crowded public bar, led the way to a private room, where, despondently, Coverdale let himself down into a lounge. Nothing was said between them until the Javanese "boy" had slid in and out with the drink tray. Then, Gonsalez leaned forward and placed a small object carefully upon the tablecloth.

"What do you make of that, Coverdale?"

Coverdale stiffened. His sinewy fingers gripped the arms of the cane lounge until they cracked. As if hypnotized, he stared at the pearl.

"Mine!" he muttered at last, moistening dry lips. "Taken from me last night!"

"Of course." The soft, white mask that was Gonsalez's face dissolved into a slow smile. "That's why you killed Fong-Lo!"

"It was my life or his!" Coverdale defended dully. "He took the stone just before the opium got me under. Pulled a knife when I gripped him——" He broke off with a gesture. "Why did you and Song-Li spin that yarn in court?" he demanded fiercely, "and what's going to happen to that poor devil, Ah Sing?"

Reverently fingering the pearl before him, Gonsalez, head drawn back, eyes narrowed, admired its nascent luster against the light.

"No evidence!" he smiled at last. "They've got no evidence."

"So that's the solution!" observed Coverdale thoughtfully. "You're a Tong-worker. I might have guessed."

Gonsalez puffed out blue smoke and chuckled.

"You guess too much, my friend," he warned gently. "Be careful if you value your life!"

A silence fell in the hot room. A small putty-colored lizard upon the wall opposite made a lightning dart and impaled a fly upon its flickering tongue. Coverdale found the incident symbolical; he looked at Gonsalez and shuddered.

Suddenly Gonsalez's huge body creaked in its chair.

give you six months!" In the tense silence that followed he was aware of Wong at his back, knife ready for the signal to strike——

"No, you're wrong about the pearl—it's not yours. This stone came to me through a drunken Jap three months ago. He told a strange, rambling story which I took for lies; but in the light of further inquiries, I am not so sure."

Coverdale's gaze was stony; but a close observer might have noted the trembling of his fingers upon the lounge.

With a slow, unhurried movement Gonsalez placed something else upon the cloth.

"There is its twin. It is yours—taken from Fong-Lo's hand last night. The question is—where did you get it from, my friend?"

COVERDALE relaxed. He threw back his head and laughed, albeit a trifle stridently.

"You fool, Gonsalez!" he cried, scornfully. "So that's why you and Song-Li handed out that dope in court. It's too damn funny for words! Why, that pearl came to me in much the same way as——"

"Coverdale—Coverdale!" purred Gonsalez reproachfully. "I'm disappointed in you. Also, you underrate me." He settled his huge body comfortably. "Let me tell you a little story:

"About two hundred years ago a gentleman by the name of Dampier happened to discover this particular god-forsaken bit of the world. History labels him explorer; but in between distributing names to bays and capes, he had an eye to the main chance, or to put it concisely—loot!

"In Roebuck Bay he collared a big cache of pearls belonging to the natives. Unfortunately for his peace of soul, however, he possessed a mate named De Groot, and this gentleman appears to have appropriated the haul and bolted.

"Dampier reports the whole incident in his log; also how he laid De Groot by the heels upon a certain island and strung him to the yardarm of the *Roebuck*. That very natural action, however, although appeasing Dampier's righteous wrath, didn't bring him back his pearls. De Groot had effectively concealed them—presumably upon that particular island, since Dampier, with true Dutch caution, omits any mention of its name. So the problem now arises: which island was it?" he added, with a swift glance at his companion.

As if fascinated, Coverdale was watching the other's slow-moving lips.

"Ever heard of Nepenthe, Coverdale?"

The smooth, lazy question shook Bruce Coverdale like a bullet. His face whitened under its tan. He started forward threateningly.

"You devil!" he ground out.

SHRUGGING with placid tolerance, Gonsalez continued:

"That's the worst of opium—it lets too many cats out of the bag. We'll start the day after tomorrow, Coverdale; my schooner, the *Jason*, is lying idle in the Bay. How does that suit you?"

"Not at all," snapped Coverdale curtly. "I'll see you damned first!"

"It's a pity you're so obstinate," Gonsalez sighed regretfully. "A word to a certain Tong might make things unpleasant. The Chinks have a playful habit of taking their revenge. *They* know you killed Fong-Lo. Come, what do you say?"

In spite of the heat Coverdale shivered.

"You appear to hold trumps," he said slowly; and then, with strong emphasis, "but before God, Gonsalez, I warn you that you do a foolish thing. Nepenthe Island is accursed; that's why I'm here. I ran away!"

Gonsalez waved a languid hand, unmoved by the warning.

"That's sensible," he approved. "And don't worry about me, Mr. Coverdale; I think I was born without nerves." He rose, ponderous, complacent. "And now let's get along to 'chow'—oh, yes," he added, at the other's protest, "I promised my little girl I'd bring you back!"

Gonsalez's household resembled himself; it was smooth, placid, running upon oiled wheels. Its luxury and evidence of wealth amazed Coverdale, grown accustomed during the past few years to shell-reeking cabins and the so-called amenities of pearling hotels.

Dinner was served, upon the heels of a shuddering gong, in a steel-meshed, mosquito-netted room. The night air, hot and scented, penetrated in oppressive gusts. Above the table, agleam with exquisite napery and silver, a large punka swung, steady and rhythmical.

Gonsalez made a perfect host. Suavely attentive, his lazy, heavy-lidded eyes missed nothing. As the curry was served they wandered to his daughter opposite.

"Beryl, my dear, you look tired!" he exclaimed abruptly.

The girl started. "I drove to Cable Beach this afternoon," she said in a low voice. "It was very hot."

"Alone?"

"No, I took Wong with me."

COVERDALE glanced curiously at the motionless figure behind Gonsalez's chair. Never before had he set eyes upon such a Chinaman. Big, with the colossal proportions of a West African negro, his loose silken jacket made him appear even more gigantic than he really was. An angry crimson scar, running from high cheek bone to jaw, lent to his face a grinning, sinister expression.

"I see you are curious about Wong," remarked Gonsalez, with his slow smile. "Wong's is a singular case. I found him one night in a back street off the native quarter in Kopong, bleeding to death, with a knife between his shoulders. His size for a Chinaman is of course phenomenal, and it was that, I think, which attracted me. I had him taken to my hotel and gradually patched him up. He is faithful and seldom leaves me. And that reminds me. Beryl, Mr. Coverdale and I propose making a little trip in the *Jason*. I intend to take you with us, so please make your preparations. We——"

A tinkle of breaking glass interrupted him. With her face drained of blood, a trickle of spilt wine staining the cloth before her, the girl stared at her father. A thrill shot up Coverdale's spine; for if any one ever saw sheer terror looking from human eyes, he saw it then! She rose, swaying.

"Excuse me," she faltered. "I don't feel very well—the heat——" She left the room quickly, her silken frock rustling——

Gonsalez sighed patiently. He completed the delayed action of conveying an olive to his mouth.

"Poor little girl!" he murmured. "You know, Coverdale, this climate is hellish for a woman!" He flung three words in Chinese softly over his shoulder, and Wong slid from the room like some noiseless automaton.

Coverdale, grave and preoccupied, sat in silence. The misery patent upon the girl's face had stirred him to the depths. He longed to say, "It's not the climate, you swine, but you!" and drive his fist into the fat, white mask—— Instead, he sat still; and presently a strange, enigmatic smile twitched at his lips——

"Of course," murmured Gonsalez, with a side glance, "you will regard yourself as my guest; a room has been prepared."

CASE LIBRARY

"You must think me very foolish, Mr. Coverdale," the girl murmured, as they sat sipping coffee on the veranda. From behind sounded Gonsalez's hateful chuckle

"A prisoner, in fact!" sneered Coverdale, intentionally and provocatively rude.

Gonsalez shrugged.

"As you will," he deprecated, "but you must admit you have made strange enemies, and I cannot afford to lose you before the *Jason* sails."

Upon the verge of an outburst, Coverdale paused, and then again smiled slowly, as at some inward joke.

Later the girl returned and sat with Coverdale upon the veranda, sipping coffee.

"You must think me very foolish, Mr. Coverdale!" she murmured.

Coverdale started. "You scared me at dinner," he confessed soberly. "I hope you have fully recovered?"

From behind sounded Gonsalez's slow, hateful chuckle. Coverdale swung around angrily.

"Oh, please!" whispered the girl imploringly, and against his will Coverdale relaxed into immobility. Gloomily he watched the white shimmer that was Gonzalez's back disappear into the smoking room.

The girl's voice when she spoke again was softly pleading.

"Mr. Coverdale," she said, "you must not undertake this trip on the *Jason!*"

Coverdale's cigar glowed spasmodically.

"Why not?" he asked at last.

She hesitated. "Because," she forced out at last, reluctantly, "if you do you will not return!"

Coverdale drew a breath of amazement.

"Indeed," he said slowly. "But I am going with Mr. Gonsalez."

"Exactly." Her voice was level now and dispassionate. "The last two men who voyaged upon the *Jason* have yet to come back."

"Good heavens!"ejaculated the startled Coverdale. "But he is your father!"

"No, no, no!" Passionately she beat her hands together. "He is my stepfather." Her voice hardened, became metallic. "He killed my mother—the sweetest, gentlest woman that ever breathed. Not with his hands, but by years of cynical torture. Behind his mask he is a fiend incarnate! He hates me as a vicious man hates one he has wronged. I know too much. And I am afraid of him—oh, so afraid! One day he will strike, and that day I am convinced is drawing near. That is why I am to sail upon the *Jason.*"

Coverdale got up abruptly and crossed to the veranda rail.

Down in the bay, her shape picked out by a string of lights, the Singapore mail lay against the jetty. The scream of a fretful winch rose faintly to Coverdale's ears——

After a while he turned to the listless figure on the lounge.

"Listen," he said quietly. "I can't get out of this trip, even if I wanted to. But my personal safety is guaranteed up to a certain point, and after that I've got an idea that I shall be able to take care of both of us. Make no bones about sailing and leave the fireworks to me. Will you?"

The gratitude with which she grasped at the straw he offered was pathetic.

"Yes," she whispered. "And, oh—thank you!" In the darkness her slim fingers found his and clung——

Three hours later, in the room assigned him, Coverdale was hanging something metallic by a bit of string

outside the window when a sound made him turn suddenly, blood pounding in his ears. It was a cry, low-pitched, and unmistakably from the lips of a woman.

He made the door in one tense bound and stumbled into the darkness of the hall.

At the entrance, almost from under his feet, a figure arose and rushed into his room. Coverdale paused a moment in indecision. There was a flurry of tossed garments by his bed, a rapid slapping of the pillow and sheets, the padding of feet about the floor—obviously a search for what had just been so opportunely concealed.

Quickly the figure returned to the door. It was Wong—gigantic, menacing. Coverdale caught the shimmer of a naked knife.

"What was that sound?" he demanded, with sharp insistence. "Who called?"

Wong stood immobile, intent and wary.

"I no hear. P'laps curlew," he suggested blandly.

Swiftly Coverdale balanced up his chances and decided against direct action.

"Curlew be damned!" he swore irritably. Defeated, he went back to lie watchful and anxious until the first glimmer of dawn. Then he dressed and retrieved the automatic from its dangling concealment outside the window.

NEPENTHE, viewed at dawn, resembled a fairy islet set upon a platter of beaten gold.

But the beauty of the scene was wasted upon Coverdale, who, arms upon the schooner's rails, frowned gloomily at the silver spit of beach overhung by the green forest.

The *Jason*, nosing delicately through the coral, shattered the pellucid serenity of the lagoon with the clack and thunder of her dropping anchor.

A cloud of scared parroquets, brilliantly plumaged, rocketed up from the palm tops; their discordant scolding came faintly across to the *Jason's* decks.

"Oh!" breathed a clear voice at Coverdale's back. "How beautiful! It looks like a dream island from 'Peter Pan'!"

Coverdale whipped about. Throughout the whole seven days of the voyage the girl had been absent from the deck, and his eyes were hungry for her face.

"A nightmare island!" he amended grimly. Then, significantly, "You've been playing truant. Why?"

She hesitated.

"Oh, don't bother," he cut in, drawling. "I know. Gonsalez shut you up. But what's he aiming at? What——"

He fell silent on a sudden. She looked up and saw him staring fixedly at her throat—at the faint red weal which still scarred the milk-white skin——

"I see," he ground out at last, voice trembling with passion. "That was why you cried out the night before we sailed. I tried to come to you, but——" He made a helpless gesture.

"Wong would have killed you," she said dully. "I'm glad you did not."

"I know," he nodded. "I couldn't afford to risk it. Oh, the skunk—the devil!" he burst out, knuckles white, raw fury in his eyes. "He must think himself very safe to play a game like this!"

"He heard what I said to you on the veranda that evening," she explained. "I thought he was going to kill me——" She broke off, shivering.

COVERDALE raked the deserted deck with a quick glance. He came closer to the girl and transferred a cold, metallic object from his pocket to her hand.

"That's an automatic—eight shots," he jerked out. "Just push up the catch and press the trigger—it'll stop an elephant! Hide it and don't hesitate to use it, if you're threatened again. And remember——" He suddenly stiffened, and the intense expression upon his face changed to one of tolerant amusement.

"No, Miss Beryl," he drawled, "the only snake I ever saw on Nepenthe was a carpet one, and——"

Quick-wittedly, she played up to his lead.

"Oh, I don't mind *those*," she declared vivaciously. "It's the wriggly, black spinifex snakes that frighten me!"

Gonsalez was approaching with his usual cat-footed lightness and was surveying them with a lazy smile.

"Breakfast's ready, you two," he announced smoothly. "I want to get a move on immediately afterward, Coverdale."

Coverdale nodded carelessly.

"Suits me excellently," he agreed.

As they walked aft, the girl's fingers touched Coverdale's arm.

"Oh, be careful!" she warned. "He means mischief!"

Coverdale gave her his first grin of the morning.

"Don't worry," he murmured, as they went together down the cabin-way. "So do I!"

The first clash occurred upon the beach. Gonsalez, bulky and serene, Winchester tucked into the crook of his arm, watched Coverdale help the girl from the dinghy to the hot, white sand.

"Beryl, my dear," he purred, "I want you to wait upon the beach."

The girl whitened.

"Oh, no!" she cried impulsively. "I'd much rather come. I—I——" Faltering under the placid, inscrutable gaze, she turned appealingly to Coverdale.

He was considering Gonsalez with black suspicion.

"Why not?" he asked sourly. "Why shouldn't she? It's only a mile and fairly easy going."

Gonsalez, smiling tolerantly as at two rebellious children, shook his head gently.

"Impossible, my dear Coverdale; there may be danger."

The pulses in Coverdale's temples began to hammer ominously. The sneering hypocrisy of this fat devil sickened him.

"Why, you confounded double-crosser!" he stormed furiously. "I wouldn't give tuppence for her chances, once you've finished your dirty schemes and got rid of me!"

Eyebrows lifted, Gonsalez shrugged.

"She will stay," he reiterated smoothly; and in a most natural manner, as if his arm had tired, jerked forward the Winchester.

COVERDALE hesitated, then dropped sprawling to the beach.

"Right!" he snapped, staring indifferently straight ahead. "Find the pearls yourself. It's a tidy bit of island and I'll give you six months!"

In the tense silence which followed he was aware of Wong at his back, knife ready for the signal to strike—— And then, he realized that his bluff had succeeded! The shadow of Wong's arm began to drop away—slowly, reluctantly.

"You're an obstinate devil, Coverdale," came Gonsalez's bland tones, "but I suppose we must humor you. Beryl, my dear, thanks to your gallant Bayard, you must put up with a couple of hours of heat and flies!"

Several minutes later the small procession scrunched over the sand toward the shade of the tall, mop-headed pandanus trees, Coverdale leading, followed by the girl. Gonsalez dropped behind, muttering to Wong, and Coverdale seized the opportunity to whisper to the girl.

"I was too afraid of the scum on the schooner to leave you on the beach. But shortly I'm going to be unfortunate enough to swallow a fly. When that happens you must sprain your ankle, and decline to go farther. It's imperative for you to be out of the way when the fur flies——" He broke off suddenly, as Gonsalez closed the distance between them, and in silence they traversed an almost obliterated track in Indian file, Coverdale leading, with Gonsalez now immediately behind.

THE heat was terrific. The boom of surf on the reef, drummed through the suffocating air—dull, menacing. A cockatoo, high above their heads, shrieked stridently. Coverdale, bending, began to choke and cough

"Damn—these—flies!" he gasped.

The girl took her cue magnificently.

In a moment she stumbled, cried out, and subsided upon the root of a huge cork tree. Her lips twitched with pain.

"I'm afraid I can't go on; I've sprained my ankle!" she murmured piteously.

Gonsalez's eyes narrowed; he shot a quick, suspicious glance at Coverdale's back. Then he shrugged.

"We will pick you up on our way home," he said, and glanced significantly at the impassive Wong.

A quarter of a mile further on they emerged suddenly from green semi-gloom into bright sunlight, glaring harshly upon the remains of a gigantic, volcanic upheaval. The sea was near at hand again. The ground writhed grotesquely down to the beach, tortured into a thousand ruts and chasms.

Coverdale, halting, threw a sardonic look at Gonzalez.

"Fifty caves, and all alike," he declared mockingly. "In one De Groot hid the pearls of Nepenthe. Puzzle—find it!"

"That, my friend, you will tell us!" murmured Gonsalez placidly, fat fingers tip-tapping the butt of his Winchester.

Coverdale, exasperatingly calm, seated himself leisurely upon a boulder. Producing a cigarette, he lit it; blew a cloud o smoke reflectively at the humming mosquitoes.

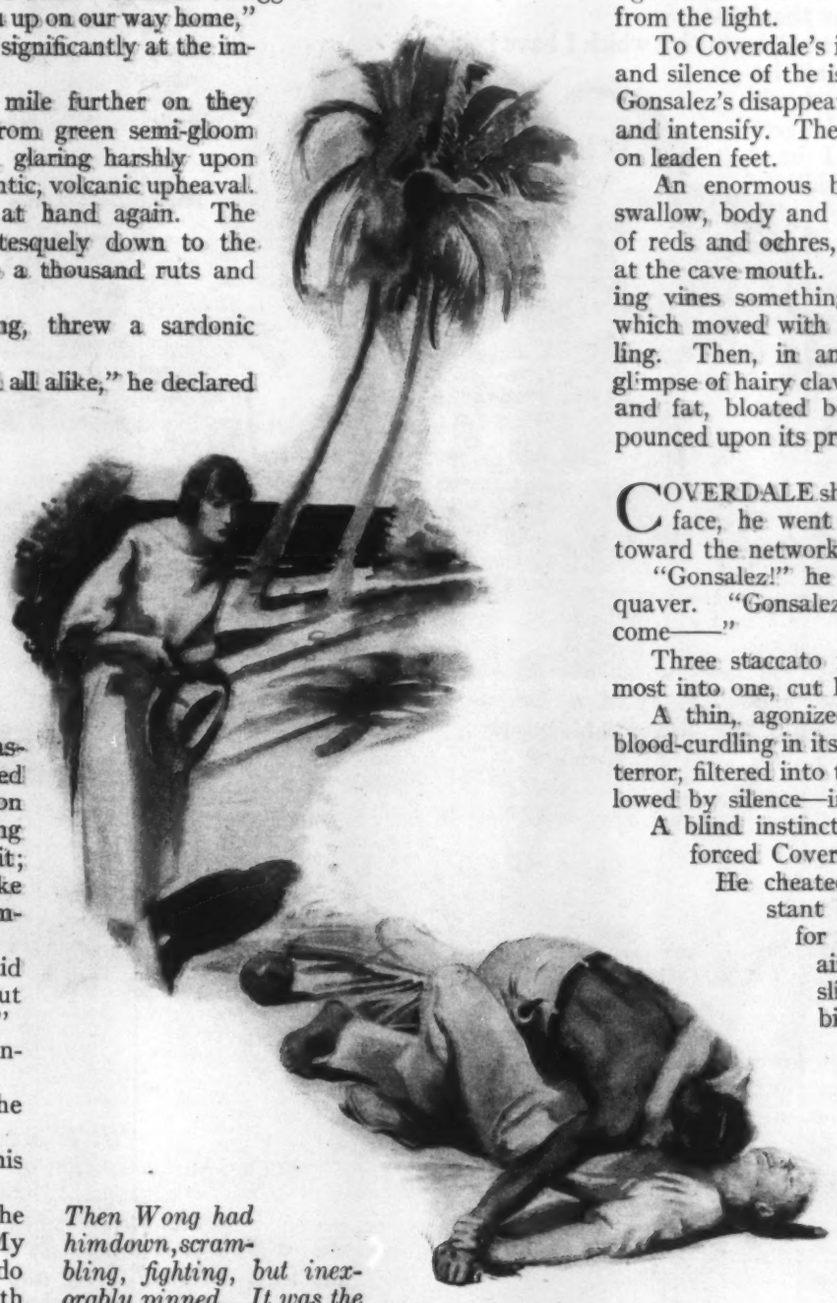
"Perhaps," he said at last, slowly. "But upon one condition!"

Gonsalez smiled understandingly.

"Fifty-fifty?" he queried smoothly.

Coverdale shook his head.

"Wrong tack!" he declared equably. "My condition is that I do not enter the cave with you!"



Then Wong had him down, scrambling, fighting, but inexorably pinned. It was the beginning of the end!

Dead silence fell for a tense moment during which Gonsalez's eyes studied the other unwinkingly.

"A curious condition," he murmured at last. "But I agree. You shall remain outside with Wong. At the slightest sign of treachery, he will kill you. Is that agreeable?"

Rising, Coverdale gave him a mocking little bow.

"I shall be delighted!" he said, and led the way through a tortuous passage in the maze of rocks and chasms. He paused finally before a cave which was overhung with red, clinging vines. Their bloated stems seemed horribly akin to tentacles. A faint, repulsive odor of musk hung in the heated air.

Coverdale silently gestured, and Gonsalez, producing an electric torch from his pocket, went forward. He drew aside the network of vines and flashed it into the gloom.

After a moment's scrutiny he turned, a slow, derisive smile at his lips.

" 'Four dummy cavities on the right after thirty paces, and in the fifth, a tin box!' " he quoted softly.

Coverdale started. He stared, puzzling.

"That's the worst of opium," chuckled Gonsalez. "It steals the brain and wags the tongue!" Then, with a significant nod to Wong, he stepped from the light.

To Coverdale's imagination, the heat and silence of the island, following upon Gonsalez's disappearance, seemed to grow and intensify. The minutes dragged by on leaden feet.

An enormous butterfly, large as a swallow, body and wings an exotic orgy of reds and ochres, hovered uncertainly at the cave mouth. Above it in the trailing vines something stirred—something which moved with a dry, stealthy rustling. Then, in an eye-flick, giving a glimpse of hairy claws, myriad eye points and fat, bloated body, the bird spider pounced upon its prey.

COVERDALE shuddered. With ashen face, he went at a stumbling run toward the network of vines.

"Gonsalez!" he called in a cracked quaver. "Gonsalez! For God's sake, come——"

Three staccato reports, blending almost into one, cut him short.

A thin, agonized wail, despairing—blood-curdling in its sheer, unadulterated terror, filtered into the hot air—— Followed by silence—intense, pulsating!

A blind instinct of self-preservation forced Coverdale to whirl about. He cheated death in that instant by a hair's breadth; for Wong's knife-thrust, aimed for his heart, slid instead into the big shoulder muscle, jarring against the bone.

Sickened by the pain, Coverdale nevertheless grappled desperately. Despairingly, he sensed the enormous power in

[*Cont. on p.* 129]

Mr. Tom Hill, Sheriff, Injects Humor into a Baffling Murder Mystery

Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

By Charles Wesley Sanders

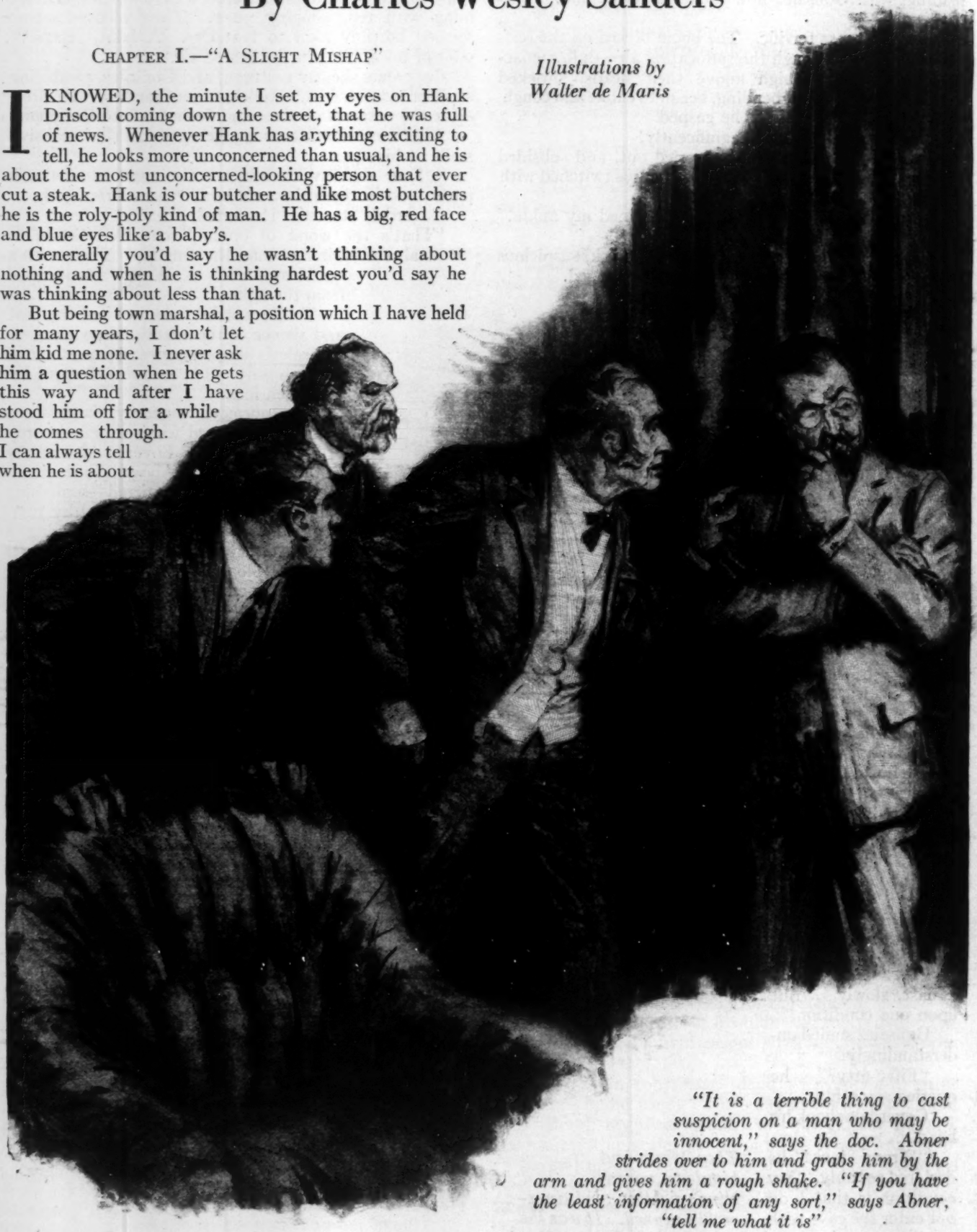
Illustrations by Walter de Maris

Chapter I.—"A Slight Mishap"

I KNOWED, the minute I set my eyes on Hank Driscoll coming down the street, that he was full of news. Whenever Hank has anything exciting to tell, he looks more unconcerned than usual, and he is about the most unconcerned-looking person that ever cut a steak. Hank is our butcher and like most butchers he is the roly-poly kind of man. He has a big, red face and blue eyes like a baby's.

Generally you'd say he wasn't thinking about nothing and when he is thinking hardest you'd say he was thinking about less than that.

But being town marshal, a position which I have held for many years, I don't let him kid me none. I never ask him a question when he gets this way and after I have stood him off for a while he comes through. I can always tell when he is about



"It is a terrible thing to cast suspicion on a man who may be innocent," says the doc. Abner strides over to him and grabs him by the arm and gives him a rough shake. "If you have the least information of any sort," says Abner, "tell me what it is"

ready to loosen up, for he begins to puff like a baby that gets a glance at its dad's watch for the first time. He just opens his little mouth and "huh-huhs" till the words tumble out.

"Howdy, Hank," says I, as he comes up to me on Main Street, just in front of the post office. "Nice evenin'. Nice June evenin'. Lots o' stars. Ca'm and peaceful-like." I makes as if to pass along, for it was ten o'clock and my bedtime as a rule is then. But Hank stops and "huh-huhs" once or twice excited like.

"Must be somethin' important stirring," says I to myself.

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says, "how is that tin Lizzie of yours ridin' these days?"

"Why," I says, "free and easy. There ain't no better ridin' boat in the county, far as I know."

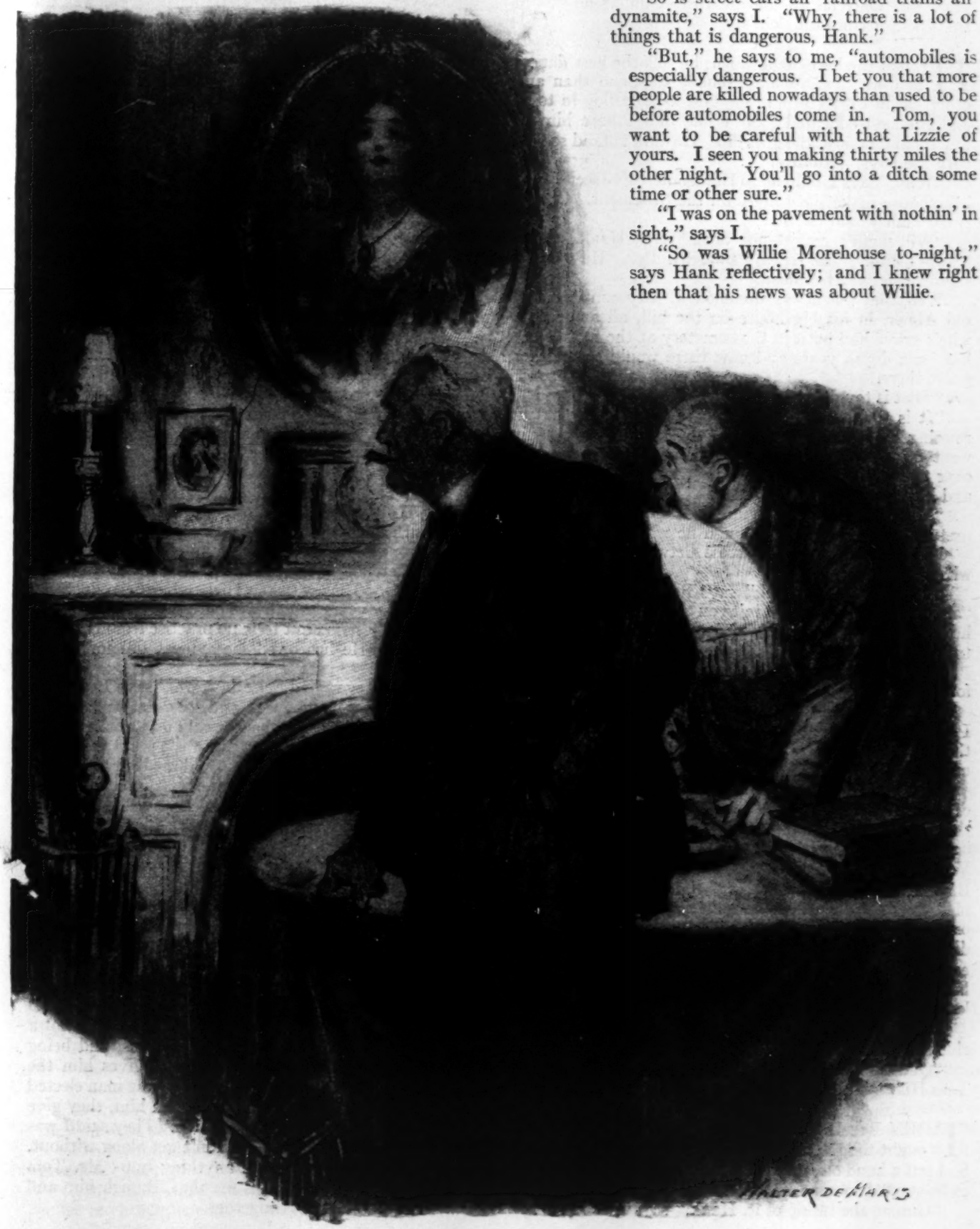
"Automobiles," says he, "is dangerous things—very dangerous things indeed."

"So is street cars an' railroad trains an' dynamite," says I. "Why, there is a lot of things that is dangerous, Hank."

"But," he says to me, "automobiles is especially dangerous. I bet you that more people are killed nowadays than used to be before automobiles come in. Tom, you want to be careful with that Lizzie of yours. I seen you making thirty miles the other night. You'll go into a ditch some time or other sure."

"I was on the pavement with nothin' in sight," says I.

"So was Willie Morehouse to-night," says Hank reflectively; and I knew right then that his news was about Willie.



Willie was the only son of old Abner Morehouse, that runs the bank in our town. Old Abner had always been as stiff and straight as a board. He'd lived in our town all his life and so'd his pa before him. His business would be expected to go on to Willie in time and some folks said that from Willie it would go on to the devil, for Willie was as supple as his father was stiff. He had already raised more devilment in our town than any twenty other lads put together. He w'an't bad as I know of. Only he was never satisfied unless he was in the thick of constant doin's.

HE had the best car in town; he was the best dancer in town; he had more money to spend than any other lad in town; he was the best-looking boy in town and the best-educated. So Willie didn't hate himself exactly and none of the girls did. He didn't stand so well with the boys, naturally.

"Why," says I, offhand to Hank now, "I've seen Willie Morehouse make sixty miles on the pavement. Only a crazy man would do that."

"Willie ain't crazy—not now," says Hank. "No, he ain't crazy," he repeats thoughtfully. "He's had a slight mishap. He's dead."

Well, that was news, sure enough. My mind went to old Abner, in his big house on the hill, all alone. His wife's grave had been in the cemetery at the foot of the hill for a dozen years and now there would be another grave there.

"That is tough on Abner, Hank," says I.

"It is tougher on Willie," Hank says. "Willie was running his car like the wind half an hour ago and it went off the pavement and into the ditch and rolled over twice and buried Willie under it. He is all broken and busted up."

"Yes, it is tough on Willie," I agreed. "He was a pretty good sort of boy, though he was kind of wild."

Hank give a kind of a cross between a puff and a whoof.

"Why, Mr. Tom Hill," says he, his eyes jumpin', "ain't you got no sense? Ain't you goin' up to old Abner's house an' look into this matter in your official capacity as town marshal?"

"Why," says I, "ain't it a case for the coroner and not for the marshal?"

"Well," says Hank, with a sigh which said plain that I was a bonehead, "Mayor Brower don't look at it in that manner. Doc Oldham don't look at it in that manner. Them two has gone up there."

"If them two has gone up there, God pity what's left of poor Willie!" says I.

"That's you!" Hank shrilled. "You let your spite against the mayor and the new doc get the best of you. You don't like them and whatever they do you won't do. But, Mr. Tom Hill, can you give a good reason why a high-class car like Willie's would leap off the pavement on a moonlight night like this and go careenin' into the ditch? Willie may have been crazy, but he could drive a car an' that pavement is as good a roadway as a car could hit. If you got brains, Mr. Tom Hill, whyn't you use 'em?"

"You mean there is somethin' queer about the accident?" says I.

"Queer?" he repeats. "Accident? Good night, Mr. Tom Hill."

THEN I reckoned there was something afoot that I ought to look into in my capacity of town marshal. So I put a hand on Hank's arm and brought him up short as he started to move away.

"Gimme the inside of it, Hank," says I, sharp.

"Well," says he, "I was about to close up my shop when Doc Oldham comes busting up in that one-hoss shay of a car of his and demands gas quick." Like almost every other merchant in town Hank has a gas pump in front of his store. "He tells me the story," Hank goes on. "While I am giving him the gas, up the mayor comes and gets in beside him, 'n they begin to talk."

"'The boy must have lost control of his car,' says Oldham.

"'Never!' says the mayor, positive. 'He was too good a driver. Willie wouldn't have lost control of it unless he dropped dead or fainted!'

"'He didn't faint,' says the doc. 'He didn't drop dead. I examined him a bit ago for life insurance he was taking out and he was as fine a specimen of young manhood as you could find.'

"'As I get the story over the phone, the car left the pavement in front of George Kibby's house,' says the mayor. 'Well, that pavement is twenty-five feet wide there. No other car was in sight. You can see for half a mile along the pavement under the lights. Willie would have been as safe in his car there as if he had been dancing on a ballroom floor. All he had to do was to keep his hands on the wheel and let the car go ahead.'

"'Exactly,' the doc chimes in. 'There is something mysterious about this.'

"'There may be foul play here,' says the mayor.

"By that time I had got the doc's tank filled and the car wheezed off, taking them two with it."

"Well, they're up at Morehouse's now," says I. "I guess I better go up and have a look. Somebody will have to take a look. Oldham and Brower will make a mess of things."

"You don't like them two," Hank says.

"OLDHAM opposed me for reelection," says I, "and I ain't been opposed in twenty years. I don't think so much of that darned whipper-snapper Oldham comin' in here an' tryin' to take practise away from my old friend, Doc Hickey, when Hickey has been doctorin' folks for thirty years and always paring down their bills."

"I guess Oldham ain't took no practise from Hickey," Hank says. "He has owed me a meat bill for ninety days."

"And owes everybody else in town," says I. "Well, let's go on up to Morehouse's and see what's what."

I heaved myself along the sidewalk and Hank trotted beside me. We come pretty soon to the place where the car had left the pavement. We could see it in the moonlight in the ditch beside the road—a battered, shapeless wreck of what had once been a fine car. Willie had been driving her for sure. His life must have been crushed out in a twinkling.

We rung the doorbell at Morehouse's and the woman that done the housework opened the door. She was scared past talk and just stepped back so's we could come in. I heard voices in the first room off the hall and we went in there. Morehouse was there and Oldham and Brower and Bill Treat, the coroner.

The men in the room stopped their low talk when me and Hank come in. Brower and me hate each other and make no bones about it. He's only a kid himself, not a great deal older than Willie Morehouse was, and being mayor and cashier in the bank to boot gives him the swelled head. He had wanted to get a young man elected to my job, but though the people elected him, they give him the laugh on the other proposition. They said I was an institution that the town couldn't get along without. Why, nobody never calls me anything but "Mr. Tom Hill." Even Morehouse calls me that, though him and me went to public school together.

"Alice Moore ain't no fool," I says. "In fact, I've always kind of admired her for her spunk. She knows she's only old Mike's daughter, but she keeps her head up"

"There's work for you here, Mr. Tom Hill," says Morehouse now, sharp, hard, though a little ketchy in his breathing. "My boy Willie has been murdered—shot through the heart!"

Chapter II.—"Get Busy"

"SO that's how it come his car went plunging off the smooth pavement, is it?" says I.

The mayor gimme one of his nasty looks out of his greenish eyes.

"Any one would know that something of the sort must have happened," says he. "Willie wouldn't lose control of his car on a smooth straight-away. Murder has been done here, Hill."

"I heard what Abner says," says I. "Doc," says I, "how do you figure it happened?"

"Some one who knew how to shoot did it," says Oldham. "Willie was going fast. It was like shootin' a skimming swallow to put a bullet into him. It looks as if the bullet pierced his heart, since his death appears to have been instant and since the wound is such that the bullet probably passed through the chest in the region of the heart."

"Somebody stood by the roadside and plugged him?" says I.

"Exactly," says the doc, like he knew for certain.

"Who discovered the wrecked car?" I asked.

"George Kibby heard the crash and run out and found the car with Willie pinned beneath it," Oldham answers. "He called the boys from the fire-engine house and they come and got the body free of the car. Willie was dead then."

"Who called you and Brower?" says I.

"Why, Mr. Morehouse," the doc answers quickly.

"I thought Hickey was your doctor, Abner," says I.

"HE is," Morehouse answers. "But I couldn't get him. His phone was out of order. So I called Doctor Oldham. Willie had been to Doctor Oldham a few days before for an examination."

"How'd it come he didn't go to Hickey for that?"

"I represent the company Willie wished to insure in," the doc volunteers.

"How'd it come Willie wanted to insure, Abner?" says I. "He didn't need no insurance."

"I don't know," Abner snapped. "It was his business."

"And it throws a lot of light on the murder, doesn't it?" Mayor Brower sneered.

I see I had him riled and I wasn't going to let him rile me.

"You been to the scene of the tragedy, mayor?" I asked.

"I have not," he answered. "I came directly here soon as I heard."

"Anybody been there?" I asked.

"Only Kibby and the fireboys," Abner says. "They took him away."

"Bill," says I to the coroner, "what do you make of it?"

"Death from a bullet wound inflicted by a person or persons unknown," says Bill, solemn, for he was the town undertaker as well as coroner, the coroner not having to be a doctor under the law.

"Well," says I, "I'll mosey along down to the scene."

I moved toward the door, but Abner stopped me.

"I was rather out of touch with my boy's life," says he, passin' his hand over his forehead, weary-like. "Do any of you gentlemen know whether Willie had any enemies or not?"

"Naw," I says. "Willie was sort of wild, but he never harmed nobody. He didn't make the kind of enemies that would put a bullet into him."

"Were there—was he mixed up with a woman?" asks Abner, and it was fairly touching to see him probing for information about his only son.

"He took a great many girls riding in his car," says Brower. "I've seen him with half a dozen."

"Yeh," says I, "Willie Morehouse started that fashion not only in this town, but in the whole world. He was the first and only lad owning a car that ever took a girl for a spin."

"Well," says the mayor, mad at me for being sarcastic, "there was one girl in particular that he took out a lot lately."

"Who was that?" says Abner.

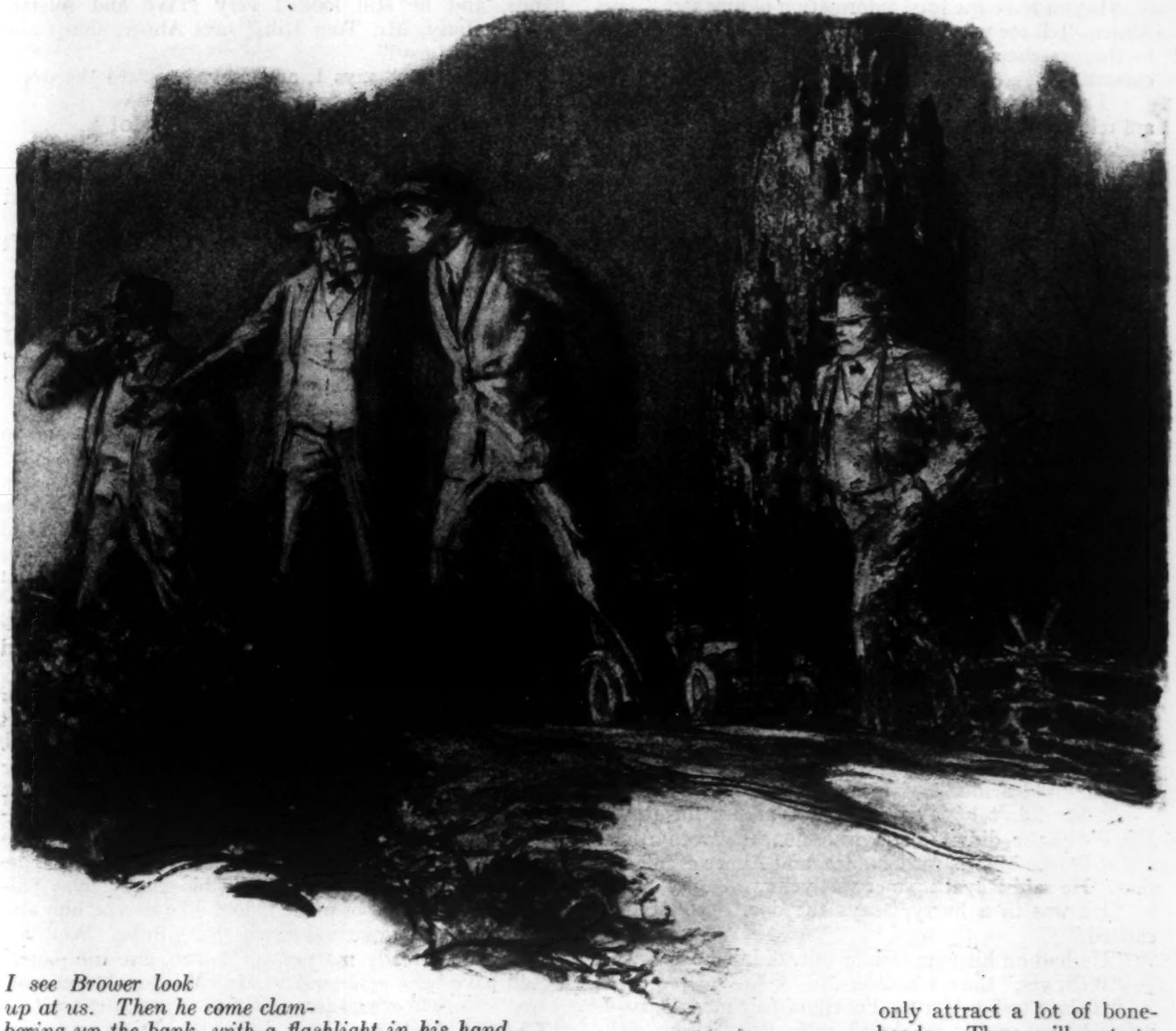
"The Moore girl that works in the Mercantile store," the mayor answers.

"You mean old Mike Moore's daughter?" Abner says, kind of aghast.

Well, you'd kind of expect that to hit him in his pride. A chasm as wide and deep as any had laid between Alice Moore and Willie Morehouse. Willie was what you might call *bon ton* and Alice lived in a shanty down by the river. Old Mike was the crossing watchman on the railroad. I'm going on sixty and seems like Old Mike has been the crossing watchman ever since I can remember. He's a gray, stubby little Irishman, who, for a fact, wears a red-flannel undershirt. Tight he is, and mean and close. He must have a little money, for he never spent none, but he still lives in the shack that has housed him for years. Too cussed mean to stir himself and get into a decent place.

The daughter lives there along with him, working daytimes in the Mercantile. I had often wondered why she didn't quit old Mike and get herself a room in the village. She was as different from Mike as a buzzard is from a swan. The old codger wore the same clothes year in and year out, far as any one could tell; but Alice went in for style, picking up ideas, I expect, at the store. She wore her skirts as short as other girls done and her waists as low at the neck, but her red cheeks and lips was red by nature, and I hadn't never heard a word against her. Defiant and hard and cold, I took that girl to be, looking you in the eye like she was ready to ask you if you didn't think she was as good as anybody and to blaze out at you if you reckoned she was not.

I HADN'T never heard of her traipsing round much, neither. Generally when the store closed you could see her marching off toward the shack with her head in the air, and mornings she would come up from that direction, looking like she had just stepped out of a bandbox, as they say. For a fact, too, her manners in the store was a shade more haughty than the mayor's



I see Brower look up at us. Then he come clambering up the bank, with a flashlight in his hand

wife's, for instance, and *she* thought she was some buckaroo, since Brower had got to be the head of the town's government.

"That girl ain't no fool," I says. "In fact, I've always kind of admired her for her spunk. She knows she's only old Mike's daughter, but she keeps her head up."

"WERE my son and this girl closely associated?" Abner asks.

"Naw," I says, "he only took her for a spin a few times. Happened to be in front of the store at her quitting time and invited her. Then they'd go out the pavement for a ways and come back. I seen them. Alice would sit up straight and take the air. That's all there was to it."

"That would be like Willie, wouldn't it, Mr. Tom Hill?" says Abner. "Just doing a kind act for a working girl."

"Yeah," says I, and I knew that betwixt us we had squelched the mayor for a minute, for he would razz me, but he wouldn't razz Abner; Abner was head of the bank and Brower cashier.

"Well," says Abner in his snappiest business way, "I am offering $5,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the person who killed my boy."

"Sho," says I, "I wouldn't do that, Abner. It will only attract a lot of boneheads. They will get to fussing around and cook up something. You let me look around a bit and see what I can discover."

"A most excellent idea, Mr. Morehouse," the mayor butts in, to be contrary to me. "A reward like that will spur every one to do his utmost to apprehend the slayer."

"Mebbe you need spurrin', I don't," says I.

"What do you think, doctor?" Morehouse asked Oldham.

Oldham didn't answer and I turned to look at him. He was staring down at the rug, his arms folded on his chest and his head bent. He was in one of these here brown studies that you read about. Seemed like he didn't hear Morehouse.

"Doctor Oldham!" says Morehouse, sharp.

"Eh, sir?" says Oldham, lifting his head slow and looking at Morehouse like he didn't see him.

"What do you think of my offering a reward for the arrest and conviction of my son's slayer?" says Abner.

"MR. MOREHOUSE," says the doc, still like he didn't hear, "I am in a quandary."

"What is it?" Abner snaps. "Wake up, man! If you have anything on your mind, let's hear about it."

"It is a terrible thing to cast suspicion on a man who may be innocent," says the doc.

Abner strides over to him and grabs him by the arm and gives him a rough shake.

"If you have the least information of any sort," says Abner, "tell me what it is. Do you realize that you are in the presence of as foul a murder as has ever been committed?"

"I realize that," says the doc, "and that is why I am reluctant to speak."

"You can give facts," says Abner. "No one is asking you for advice or opinion."

Oldham's face brightened up as if he hadn't thought of that.

"I saw Royal Selden tonight shortly after your son was shot," says the doc.

I GIVE a snort. I couldn't help it. Royal Selden! Finest lad in the village. Clean as a hound's tooth, like they say. Athlete and all that sort of thing. Never a whisper against his name. Graduate of our high school. Graduate of a college in the city. Editor of our newspaper, which he had inherited from his father. Royal Selden, indeed!

"Where was you, Oldham, shortly after Willie was shot?" says I.

"Returning from a professional call," he says.

"I thought you didn't know nothing about this matter till you was phoned," says I.

"My dear Mr. Hill," he says, "we always know more about the event after it than before. At the time I saw Royal Selden I didn't know Willie had been shot. I didn't know any one had been shot. But now I know that when I saw Selden running breathlessly along the Martin Road it was shortly after Willie had been shot. I went directly home and when I entered my house my phone was ringing. Mr. Morehouse was calling me."

"How did Selden look and act?" asks Abner.

Abner didn't have an awful lot of use for Royal. Royal's paper didn't distinguish none between Abner and old Mike Moore, for instance, and Abner didn't like that. He said Royal's paper was yellow.

"He was in a hurry," says the doc. "He seemed excited."

"He had on his gymnasium suit, didn't he?" I asks.

"Well, yes," the doc answers.

"He is in trainin' for the Fourth of July races," says I. "He's been running on that Martin Road every night for two weeks. You are a newcomer here, doc, and you don't know about our Fourth of July picnic and games. Royal has always been a star in them. He's gettin' ready for the runnin' races right now."

"I understand," says the doc. "I have thrown this out for what it is worth—reluctantly, too, as I stated."

"I've seen Royal Selden and the Moore girl together a great many times in the past year," the mayor says.

I HAD expected he'd come to that. It was a fact that he had seen 'em together. So had I. So had everybody else in the village that wasn't blind. If Alice Moore had a sweetheart, Royal was it.

"Ah!" says Abner. "So Royal Selden and this Moore girl were associated, and my boy took the Moore girl riding?" He turned his head slowly and fixed his eyes on my face. "Well, Mr. Tom Hill?" he says.

"Why," says I, quick, for I was going to tackle this little job myself, "the thing to do is to find out what Royal Selden was doing on the Martin Road and whether he could by any chance have had anything to do with this matter." And I added to myself: "It won't be hard to show he didn't."

"The reward stands, Mr. Tom Hill," says Abner.

"If Royal Selden should prove to be the guilty party, the reward would go to the doc," says I.

The doc shrugged his shoulders and spread out his hands, and he still looked very grave and solemn.

"Get busy, Mr. Tom Hill," says Abner, sharp and cold. "Get busy!"

"I'm getting," says I, and moved toward the door.

Chapter III—Ping And So Ho!

HALFWAY across the room, however, I stopped.

"Abner," says I, "did Willie ever take out that insurance he got examined for?"

"That is a good point," says Abner. "I hadn't thought about it. Do you know, Doctor Oldham?"

"I don't," the doc says. "I only know that the boy came to me at the instance of young Dobbins, agent for the Premier Company, for which I am examiner. I passed him and I supposed he took out the insurance."

"He didn't tell you why he was taking it out?" Abner asks.

"No. I found he was without physical defect and so reported him to Dobbins."

"Wait a minute," Abner orders, and he left the room.

I heard him mount the stairs and move around in a room above us. Pretty soon he came down and I could see by the look on his face that he had made a discovery. He stood looking at us for a minute, then busts out:

"This is outrageous—and possibly significant."

"What is it?" says Brower.

"Willie had taken out $10,000 worth of insurance and had made it payable to Alice Moore."

Well, you could have knocked me over with a flick of your finger. The thing was most amazing. I would never have dreamed that Willie could be serious about any girl, least of all about Alice Moore. He had never thought so bad of himself; he wasn't exactly a snob, but he didn't forget that he was the aristocrat of our town—the son of old Abner Morehouse. This had been so much the way of him that I had been surprised that he had even taken Alice for a ride in his gas buggy. This here insurance kind of made it look like maybe him and Alice was already married or was going to be. Well, no, they wasn't already married, of course, else the papers would have been made out to Mrs. William Morehouse.

"BROWER," says Abner, in his haughtiest way, "see if you can get Dobbins on the phone for me."

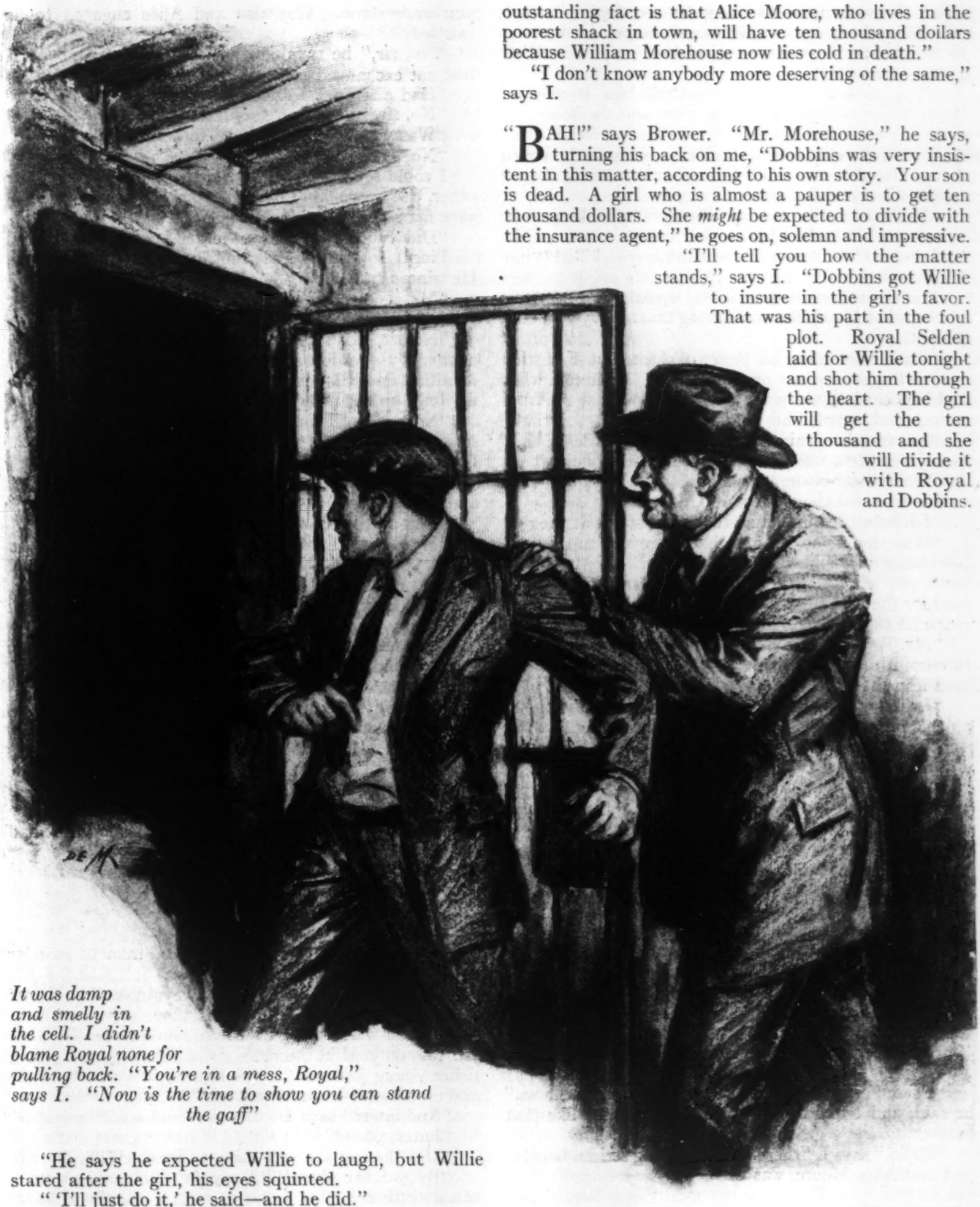
Brower, who was a natural-born errand boy for anybody that had coin, takes up the desk phone at his elbow and calls Dobbins' number.

"Just a minute," he says presently into the phone, and then to Abner: "Here you are, Mr. Morehouse."

We listened intent to the one-sided talk. Abner wanted to know about how Willie come to take out the insurance and how he come to make it payable to the girl. His voice rasped when he didn't seem to travel very far on what Dobbins told him and he slammed the receiver on the hook when he had asked the same questions several times and seemed to get the same answers.

"Dobbins says Willie took out the insurance because he, Dobbins, kept after him about it," Abner says. "He says Willie gave him the laugh for a long time—months. Willie said he didn't need insurance; he didn't expect to die for a hundred years or so. Dobbins said he give him the old argument that every man ought to have insurance and just pestered Willie and kept on pestering him. About a month ago they were standing out in front of the drug store and Dobbins was arguing again. It was just noon and the Moore girl came out on her way to lunch. Dobbins looked at her and grinned.

" 'You're sweet on Alice, Willie,' he said. 'Why don't you take out a bunch of insurance for her?'



It was damp and smelly in the cell. I didn't blame Royal none for pulling back. "You're in a mess, Royal," says I. "Now is the time to show you can stand the gaff"

"He says he expected Willie to laugh, but Willie stared after the girl, his eyes squinted.

" 'I'll just do it,' he said—and he did."

"Well," says I, "there ain't one particle of significance in this whole insurance business, then."

In butts Brower, contrary to me as usual.

"You leave the insurance matter, Hill," he says. "I'll attend to it."

I COULD see he had a kind of an idea, but he wasn't going to tell me what it was. Abner, however, demands to know. The poor old fellow was so at sea he was ready to hail any kind of a ship.

"Dobbins ain't no paragon of all the virtues," says Brower. "He may have been a tool in this matter. The outstanding fact is that Alice Moore, who lives in the poorest shack in town, will have ten thousand dollars because William Morehouse now lies cold in death."

"I don't know anybody more deserving of the same," says I.

"BAH!" says Brower. "Mr. Morehouse," he says, turning his back on me, "Dobbins was very insistent in this matter, according to his own story. Your son is dead. A girl who is almost a pauper is to get ten thousand dollars. She *might* be expected to divide with the insurance agent," he goes on, solemn and impressive.

"I'll tell you how the matter stands," says I. "Dobbins got Willie to insure in the girl's favor. That was his part in the foul plot. Royal Selden laid for Willie tonight and shot him through the heart. The girl will get the ten thousand and she will divide it with Royal and Dobbins.

Nothing could be simpler," I ends, sarcastic as possible.

"It is not beyond the pale of the possible," chimes in Doc Oldham.

"Yes, sir," I says, "that young girl and Royal Selden, who is about the cleanest lad in this county, and young Dobbins, who would jump out of his skin if anybody said 'boo' behind his back on a dark night—them three just stopped being what they have always been, and turned murderers."

"Your childlike faith in humans does you credit,

Hill," Brower sneers, turning to me again at that.

"When I begin to suspicion people they have got to be people that warrants suspicioning," says I. "Well, I'll see you later."

"You get hold of Dobbins and grill him, Brower," I heard Abner order, as I left the room and the house.

I WENT directly over to the fire-engine hall and called up Dobbins and told him to meet me at Royal Selden's house in half an hour.

"If Brower calls you up," I says, "you keep your mouth shut." And I adds in a low voice so's none of the fire lads could hear me: "Brower thinks you killed Willie Morehouse."

I hung up the receiver on a wild squeak from Dobbins. I knew what I had said would bring him to Royal's house hotfoot.

It was now going on eleven o'clock, but I hustled over to Royal's and got him out of bed. I told him what had happened all along the line. He looked at me calm enough and rumpled his red hair.

"Doc Oldham is hinting that I am the murderer, eh?" he says. "Well, well!" He put on a bathrobe and sat down in an easy-chair, yawning.

"You're cool about it," says I.

"Uh-huh," he kind of grunts and he stares at the rug.

"Why don't you tell me that there was nothing to your being on the Martin Road tonight?" says I. "Why don't you tell me that you have been running on that road for the past several weeks every night, getting into shape for the Fourth of July races?"

"Mr. Tom Hill," says he, "as a newspaperman I have to refrain from making obvious statements."

I leaned toward him, very earnest.

"Look here, Royal," says I, "you've got to wake up on this proposition. I know how you go along, kind of grinning at everybody you meet and ready to kid 'em to a frazzle. That ain't going to get you nothing."

"Mr. Tom Hill," says he, "this is going to be a very unusual experience for a newspaperman. Just think of the advantage I'll have! I can interview the accused murderer and command him to let no one else interview him. I can tell what he thinks about; analyze his emotions. It ought to boost my circulation considerable."

"Yeh," says I, "and when you face the electric chair your circulation ought to break all records in the county."

"Bosh, Mr. Tom Hill!" he says. "You can't electrocute a man for running on the road."

"What do you make out of this insurance business?" I asked.

His face hardened slow, like jelly would harden in a bowl.

"I should say that that was Miss Moore's business," he said, and I had never heard his voice rasp like that before.

"Hello," says I, "there was something serious betwixt you and Alice Moore, was there?"

"I DIDN'T say so," he snaps. "Whatever happens, Mr. Tom Hill, you will kindly not connect me and Miss Moore in this matter or in any other, and you will not connect Miss Moore in this case in any manner whatsoever."

"She's already connected," I said, "and I didn't do the connecting. That insurance matter is going to be one of the important angles in this case and you can't get away from it."

"I will break the back of any man that so much as hints anything against Miss Moore," he says.

"Royal," says I, "I've got to investigate this matter, you understand. Was you and Alice engaged to be married?"

"No, sir," he says, emphatic. "Miss Moore and I had not exchanged half a dozen words in a month."

"Had a scrap?" I asks.

"No, sir."

"Was you two *ever* engaged to be married?"

"No—dammit! No!"

I could see I was on the right track in some way or other, else he wouldn't have got so riled. He was a hard, slow man to rile.

"Did you ever ask her to marry you?"

Ping! I could see that shot go home to a bull's-eye. He winced.

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says, "I don't have to answer your questions. You're insolent."

"No, sir," says I, calm, "for a fact you don't have to answer my questions. You can answer the questions of men that don't like you as well as I do." And I heaved my bulk up out of my chair.

"Now, now, Tom," says he, "don't lets you and I scrap. It won't get us anywhere. Morehouse is dead. Let him be dead. Let the dead bury their dead."

So, ho! Here was something. His voice was hot, low, and bitter.

"You and Willie had a scrap, didn't you?" says I.

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says, looking at me hard, "you're a good soul, but pestiferous. Yes, Morehouse and I had a scrap. I told him I would break his back if—if—well, he was taking Miss Moore out in his car."

"AND YOU told him to play square with her or there would be ructions?"

"Something like that."

"Anybody hear you say it?"

"Damfino. I said it out in front of my office."

"What did Willie say?"

"He said I was nuts. He held he had as good a right to court Miss Moore as I did."

"How long before that had you asked her to marry you?" I come skipping back to that question that had stung him.

"Two or three weeks."

"Surely she didn't turn you down, Royal."

"She did—absolutely."

"For what reason?"

"Mr. Tom Hill, are we talking as man to man or as man to marshal?" he inquires.

"Man to man," saysI. "It's graveyard stuff with me."

"It was sickening," he says then, slow and soft. "She said I was too good for her. She pointed out that she was only Mike Moore's girl. She alleged I was a rising young journalist. She figured it would hurt me and my sheet if I was to wed her."

"And later?" says I.

"Later, what?"

"Did she say she was going to marry Willie?"

"By gad, Mr. Tom Hill," says he, "you are something of a detective!"

"No," says I, "I ain't. But I been watchin' folks round here for a long time. Folks int'rest me. It just struck me that Alice was the kind of a girl that would burn her bridges behind her."

"Marry herself off to Willie so that she would not be tempted to marry me, you mean?" he says. "Yes, she is that kind of girl."

"She thinks a lot of you," I says.

"It shames me to think how much," he says softly. "She thinks the world of me and I of her, and yet she erected this barrier of pride between us."

"She thought herself good enough for Willie?" says I.

"Too good," he says. "She's human and would just as soon stab old Morehouse in the back. She's a fine, high-spirited girl, Mr. Tom Hill, and she would figure that by marrying Morehouse she would get even with everybody in this town who had ever given her the cold shoulder. She wasn't hanging any bluff when she said she wouldn't marry me. You should have seen the glow of sacrifice in her eyes."

"I——" says I.

HIS phone bell jangled. He answered it and talked for a minute.

"Old Morehouse is putting an ad in my paper offering ten thousand dollars for the arrest and conviction of the slayer of his son," he says, hanging up the receiver.

"Five thousand, you mean," says I.

"Ten thousand," he repeats.

"Hum," says I, and I recollected I had left old Morehouse at the mercy of Brower and Doc Oldham, with Bill Treat as a sad and solemn accessory plumb in the middle of the fact.

"I——" says I again.

There was a ring at the front door.

"That's Dobbins," says I. "Usher him in."

He didn't need to usher Dobbins in. That person came down the hall as fast as a scrap of paper in a gale, and busts in on me.

"My, my, oh, my, my, Mr. Tom Hill!" he says. "This is positively astounding. A man insures his life with me, and then is slain. It is absolutely dumfounding, preposterous, and shocking—absolutely."

"Actions speak louder than words—leastways, yours do," says I, dry as a basket of toasted chips.

"Why—why," says he, "folks may think I had something to do with the murder. I pestered Willie to insure his life and the policy was taken out in favor of that girl. Why, folks may accuse me and her of being in a conspiracy."

"Did you have anything to do with the murder, Dobbins?" I asks, sharp.

He dropped into a chair and stared at me, his mouth wide open, like he was a fish jerked out of water all of a sudden. He gasps and gasps, as if his breath was leavin' his body for good and all.

Chapter IV.—"My Pistol"

"WELL," I says to Dobbins, "if you didn't have anything to do with the murder, tell me what you know about it."

"Why, Mr. Tom Hill," he sputters, "I didn't have anything to do with it. I was home in bed. I c'n prove that by my wife. I——"

"It looks kind of funny that you should have kept pestering Willie Morehouse to take out insurance," says I, "when you knowed he didn't need insurance no more than a cat needs rubber boots."

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says, "it was like this. My company is offering a prize of two hundred dollars for the agent that gets the most insurance written before September first on a basis of the population of the towns they work in. I can use that prize money. So I been after everybody I could think of to take insurance. That was why I went after Willie."

"You ain't been after me," says I. "You haven't mentioned insurance to me."

"Well, Mr. Tom Hill," he says, "you know folks don't go after you about things. You're different from everybody else in town. You—you're kind of exempt from bein' bothered, you know."

"I ain't satisfied with your story, Dobbins," says I, severe. "Do you know Miss Alice Moore?" I asks.

"Lordy, I've seen her at the store and on the street," he says.

"You suggested to Willie that he make his insurance payable to her, didn't you?" I asks.

"I did—in a kind of a joking way."

"Mebbe you and her framed it up—you to kill Willie and her to get the insurance and divide it with you," I suggests.

He just sits staring, his eyes popping. I said nothing, too. I could wait for him now; he was scared out of his socks.

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says after a bit, "would you like me to tell you about that insurance from first to last?"

"Not necessary," says I. "You suggested to Willie to insure in favor of Miss Moore. Willie done it. That's all there is to it."

"No, no," he says, "there is more. Let me tell you, Mr. Tom Hill. Please listen."

"Oh, I suppose I got to listen," I says, and I filled my pipe with a kind of bored air.

"Willie and me had quite a little talk when I was fixing up the policy," Dobbins says. "That was after he had had his physical examination, you understand. When the papers was all fixed up, he says to me that the money would come in handy to Miss Moore. I says I guessed he wasn't going to die right away.

" 'No,' he says, 'but maybe I will be killed. Yes, more'n likely I will be killed.'

"I ASKED him what he meant and he said his life had been threatened.

" 'Oh, you're joking, Willie,' I said.

" 'No,' he said, 'I am mixed up in one of them eternal triangles. Another man and I love the same girl.' "

"He was laughing at the time?" I asked.

"He wasn't. He was half turned from me, looking out the window and there was a wistful look in his eyes. His lips was pursed up. Oh, he looked serious enough."

"Who threatened his life?" says I.

Dobbins looked at the door, and a kind of a shock went through me.

"You don't mean——" says I, nodding toward the door where Royal might appear any minute.

"Exactly," says Dobbins. "Willie said that him and Mr. Selden was in love with the same girl—Miss Moore—and they had had words about it. Willie said that Royal had said that if Willie didn't treat Miss Moore square he would break Willie's back for him. 'You won't go scampering over the landscape in that speed boat of yours any more if you make Miss Moore unhappy, Morehouse.'

"Where did all this take place?" I asks.

"Outside Royal's newspaper office. Willie said that he was going by and Royal come out and hailed him, rough and sharp. Willie stopped. Royal come direct to the point.

" 'You've been taking Miss Moore around in your car,' Royal says. 'There is no objection to that on any one's part, so far as I know; but there might be objection to your intentions. I am interested in Miss Moore's welfare. If your intentions are honorable, all right. If they are not, I'll break your back!'

" 'Any time you want to try to break my back, you know where my spine is,' says Willie, according to himself. 'Doubtless I hold Miss Moore in as high a regard as you could possibly hold her.'

" 'Well, you behave yourself, Morehouse, or be ready to stand the gaff!' says Royal.

"And then he goes back into his printing shop. Willie said Miss Moore had promised to marry him."

"But you said," says I, "that he treated his fixing up his insurance in her favor as a kind of a joke."

"I'm givin' you in a lump what happened piecemeal," says Dobbins. "It was only yesterday that he told me that Miss Moore had promised to marry him. He had popped the question the night before."

"Funny that Willie Morehouse should go breaking his engagement to you first off," says I. "Did he treat it light?"

"No, Mr. Tom Hill," Dobbins says. "It was a business matter. He come to me to ask me if the insurance would be all right in Miss Moore's name after they was married or should he change it right away. I told him it would be all right, because the company paid to persons and not to names. I told him he could have the policy changed at any time after him and Miss Moore was spliced. No, he wasn't light about it, Mr. Tom Hill. He said he wanted to make sure because in case anything happened to him the insurance would be about all his wife would have. He said he knew his father wouldn't leave her nothing."

Miss Sarah Corning, co-worker with Agnes Evon during the Smyrna holocaust

Seven Days in Smyrna

"THE atrocity of Smyrna was the great indictment of civilization. It was the crime of organized politics of the world, in which the cruelty and cupidity of individual Turks were matched by the cupidity and indifference of Western statesmen."

Thus writes Miss Agnes Evon, an American nurse who carried on relief work among the women and children through the worst of the Smyrna disaster. Describing her grim adventures in next month's McCLURE'S, she paints an unforgettable picture of a thrilling tragedy hitherto only inadequately covered in cable despatches. Do not fail to read it.

"A GAY matter had become a serious matter with him, eh?" says I.

"Exactly," says Dobbins. "He was different yesterday from any time I ever seen him before. He seemed to have woke up to the fact that life wasn't all speeding automobiles."

"Did he say when him and Miss Moore was to be married?" I asks.

"No, but he acted like it was to be soon."

I puffed my pipe for a while. I didn't like the looks of things. Alice Moore didn't seem the kind of girl who would marry for money. False pride appeared to have kept her from marrying Royal; I should have judged real pride would have kept her from marrying Willie. Had she promised to marry him, not meaning to do it in the end? She had got herself engaged to him after she knew she would get that insurance. And after that Royal had threatened to break Willie's back if he didn't treat the girl right. Then Willie had been killed. Matters was mixed to a fair degree.

"Don't you tell Royal Selden I been blabbing all this, Mr. Tom Hill," says Dobbins, all of a sudden.

"I——" says I.

"Don't tell Royal Selden what?" says a voice, and there was Royal in the doorway.

He had come along the hall without us hearing him and he was dressed for the street.

"Where you going, Royal?" says I.

"To the scene of the crime," he says, cheerful. "I want to get a running start on this story for an early edition in the morning. I think I'll get out an early morning extra. It will stir up the old burg, Mr. Tom Hill —the murder, I mean, not the extra." He was smiling his even, cool smile, and he seemed to be thinking of nothing but his newspaper.

"Royal," says I, "have you ever had any relations with Willie Morehouse other than a how-de-do one?"

"Except as I told you I warned him I would break his back if he didn't do what he ought to do in a certain matter," says Royal.

"If I was you, I wouldn't be too promiscuous in my remarks," says I. "Remember Doc Oldham saw you tonight."

"Yeh," says he, lighting a cigarette, "I know all about this Oldham person. Do you want to go with me, Mr. Tom Hill?"

"I'll go," I agreed.

We went out to his barn and he got out his car. Dobbins wafted himself off toward home.

"What'd Dobbins tell you?" Royal asks.

"He said Miss Moore and Willie was engaged to be married," I says. I looked at him and saw his face harden.

"You never can tell what a woman will do," was all he said.

When we got to within a short distance of the place where Willie's car had jumped the track, we saw figures moving about in the bright moonlight and a flashlight being spotted here and there.

"That'll be Brower," says I.

"The poor fish!" says Royal.

When Brower was running for mayor Royal opposed him in his paper and every other way. Royal could write the darndest stuff! Seemed like it was gay and good-humored, but if he wanted it to it carried a stinger that made a man feel as if he had been bit by a snake. The party that Brower had belonged to generally had a landslide, but this election Brower nosed in by only a few votes. To him even Royal's name was like a red rag to a bull.

Royal stopped his flivver at the roadside and we piled out. We come to Morehouse and Doc Oldham first, where they had stopped at the edge of the pavement. Brower, with the flashlight in his hand, was prowling around below them.

"Find anything else?" Oldham pipes.

"Not yet," says Brower.

"Anything else?" says Royal to Morehouse. "What have you found?"

"A PISTOL," says Morehouse, hot-like. "The pistol with which my son was murdered."

"May I see it?" asks Royal.

"Mayor Brower has it," says Morehouse.

"What kind of a pistol is it?" Royal asks.

"Mayor Brower has it," Morehouse repeats.

"I'm here in my capacity as a journalist," says Royal smartly. "Do you wish to make a statement, Mr. Morehouse?"

"Not for your infernal rag," says Morehouse, curtly.

"I regret the death of your son," says Royal, calm and respectful. "My newspaper is at your disposal to help you find his slayer."

"Put in the ad I have given you and which I will pay for," says Morehouse. "That's all I have to offer."

I WAS looking down at Brower and I see him look up at us. Then he come clambering up the bank. Royal turned to him.

"Mayor Brower," says he, "may I see the pistol you have found?"

"When I have asked you a question or two," Brower says, emphatic.

"Fire away," says Royal.

I moved up till I was standing at Royal's elbow. I didn't like Brower's tone. It didn't bode no good for Royal. Morehouse and Doc Oldham stepped around me and Royal so's they were lined up with Brower.

"Do you own a pistol, Mr. Royal Selden?" Brower asks.

"I do," says Royal, with a surprised lift of his eyebrows.

"Would you mind describing it, please?"

Brower was kind of purring out his words. He made me sick. Him to be gloating over Royal!

"I wouldn't mind at all," Royal says. "It is an automatic .32 caliber, eight-shot hammerless pocket model. Why?"

"Describe it a little more fully," says Brower.

"It has a rubber stock and blued barrel," Royal goes on. "It's six and a quarter inches long. The length of the barrel is three and three-quarter inches. It weighs twenty-three ounces net. Anything more you want to know, Mayor Brower?"

"One thing," says Brower, with a bite in his voice: "Where is that pistol now?"

"In my car," says Royal.

"Will you bring it to me, sir?"

"I will, sir."

Royal goes to the car, comes back, a little flush on his cheek bones.

"It isn't there," he says.

"Were there any marks on your pistol, Mr. Selden?" Brower asks.

"I filed two indentations on the stock to mark it," Royal says. And then he busts out in the hot, young way he had when he was annoyed: "Say, Brower, if you think the pistol you have found is mine, let me see it and I'll tell you whether it is or not."

Brower pulled a pistol from behind his back and held it out by the barrel. Royal bent over it and stared at it. I expected him to give the mayor a sneer, but he only said, quiet enough:

"That is my pistol."

Chapter V.—"Pooh Yourself"

I PONDERED while we all stood there in silence for a minute. Then it seemed to me like it was a time for using a little common sense.

"Look here, Brower," says I, "do you think if Royal had shot Willie that he would go and throw his pistol right here where it would be found easy?"

"It wasn't found easy," Brower snaps. "It was found after a painstaking search, a search not made by you, Hill. *We* found the weapon while you was off gassin' some place."

"It should be borne in mind that Mr. Selden was in his gym suit and had no very good place to conceal a pistol," Doc Oldham comes in with. "I merely throw that out for what it is worth, not as incriminating Mr. Selden in any way, but as a circumstance that might have a bearing on the situation."

"Yes, that's right," Brower agrees. "He had to get rid of the pistol."

"He could have tucked the pistol under his shirt," says I.

Both Brower and Morehouse snorted. I looked at Royal and I see he was sizing up Doc Oldham, and he had a kind of a far-away look in his eyes. Oldham didn't look at him.

All of a sudden Royal jerked up his head and turned to Morehouse.

"How did it happen, Mr. Morehouse," he says, "that you increased the reward from five thousand to ten thousand between the time Mr. Tom Hill was at your house and the time he arrived at mine?"

"I suggested that," says Doc Oldham.

"Oh!" says Royal.

He stood staring at the doc, but the doc didn't seem to notice.

"You're convinced that I'm guilty, are you?" Royal asked.

"I?" said Oldham.

"Doctor Oldham is convinced that you are *not* guilty," Morehouse busts in, snappy. "He said that he did not believe you were the kind of man that would commit so foul a crime. He said that only a criminal would have killed Willie and there was nothing in your past to indicate that you were a criminal."

I GIVE Oldham a look of surprise. I'd kind of thought he had it in for Royal, but it appeared his words to Morehouse had been fair enough.

"Doctor Oldham regards the evidence against you as superficial," Morehouse goes on. "He thinks that a bigger reward will stir everybody to do his best to apprehend the real murderer."

"I'm sure I'm much obliged to the doctor for his good opinion of me," says Royal, dry and cool.

"Oh," says Oldham, "I am trying to take a scientific view of the matter. I don't believe emotion is any aid to the solution of a crime like this. Of course what I said about you, Mr. Selden, I said before your pistol was found here. I admit that the finding of the pistol gives the matter a more sinister aspect."

"Who suggested hunting for a pistol here?" Royal demands.

"Nobody suggested hunting for a pistol anywhere," says Brower, with one of them sardonic laughs. "*I* suggested that we go over the scene to find what we could. I suppose you thought Doctor Oldham said, 'Let's go down there and find Royal Selden's pistol,' did you?"

"It's hard to surprise a newspaperman, Mayor Brower," says Royal, and his white teeth flashed.

"I always knew you were a stuck-up fool," says Brower.

I expected Royal to blaze out at that, but he didn't. He just walked slowly over to Brower, and pasted him on the snoot. Brower fell back with a yell, the blood spurting from his nose. I was thunderstruck and couldn't move for a few seconds. I had never seen a man smashed in that cool, offhand way before.

"I'll put you in jail for this, Selden!" Brower screams, tugging his handkerchief out of his pocket.

"I've owed you that for a long time, Brower," Royal says. "If you're minded to resent it as a red-blooded man should, this would be a mighty good place."

"I resent it," Brower yells, "but I resent it as an official of the town should! Hill," he says, "arrest that man for assault and battery. [*Continued on page 127*]

Introducing Our New President

Mr. Harding Now Declares His Independence of the "Best Minds"

White House Opinions Reported by W. H. Crawford

WE often make egregious errors in our judgment of public men—and so do politicians. Take President Harding, for instance. He is quite a different man from the one he is popularly conceived to be. And he has discovered that his job is widely different from what *he* expected it to be—different enough to make it impossible for him to carry out the rules of conducting the office which he so explicitly laid down during his campaign for the Presidency.

Meanwhile, the standpatters begin to fear that they have bought a gold brick. Harding fails to come up to their expectations, in that he has begun to show that he possesses a will of his own. In 1920 they regarded him as a docile gentleman who usually took the course of least resistance. They thought that he gave fealty to the doctrine of party government, meaning that he would meekly follow the directions of the Old Guard. Politicians expected him to be satisfied with the honor of being President, willingly turning over to the inner ring the real management of the office; while he, after the manner of English kings, would beguile himself with the laying of cornerstones, holding public receptions and playing golf.

In fact, the most potent argument that the astute Daugherty presented to that tired body of statesmen in the Chicago Convention was that Harding would "stay put." This was a valuable quality in the eyes of the politicians, who were disgusted with the Roosevelt-Wilson type of President—the type that refused to bow supinely to the wishes of the party leaders. The Old Guard wanted a man at the White House who would "listen to reason," and they selected Harding.

After his nomination, the political directors of his campaign saw that the voters, also, were disturbed about the growth of executive power. This gave them the keynote for their campaign. Wilson had been more or less of a despot and had boldly encroached upon the authority of the legislative branch of the government. Wise publicity, therefore, directed that the impression should go out that Senator Harding would restore the sadly shaken tripartite system of government. Wilson was a dominating personality; therefore, Mr. Harding must appear willing to be guided by the will of his party. Mr. Wilson stood solitary and alone on the peak of superior intellectual endowment; therefore, Mr. Harding was shown to be no brilliant luminary, but just a plain, ordinary mortal endowed with good, common horse sense.

The picture which his political managers showed to the public was of a good-natured, none-too-brilliant man, endowed with business ability, who, if elected, would limit his endeavor to managing his own job as executive officer of the government, and who was even willing to share the direction of his restricted duties with his party leaders, who were for campaign purposes called "the best minds." The propaganda was handled so perfectly that this picture of Harding is still the accepted likeness.

Mr. Harding's personality greatly aided the Republican Campaign Committee in putting over this view of him. He is exceedingly good-natured and friendly. His friends are still Jack and Bill to him, and he has not ceased to be Warren. He is not self-opinionated or egotistic. He does not feel that he possesses the combined wisdom of the world. He believed in party government and does yet—with limitations. He believes in compromise, provided there is no principle involved. With these qualities, he naturally fitted into the rôle which had been assigned to him.

The New Man in the White House

THE WARREN G. HARDING of 1923 is not the Warren G. Harding we knew when he was elected in 1920. A striking feature of the political trend in recent months has been the President's declaration of independence, manifest not only in his private conversations, but in his acts.

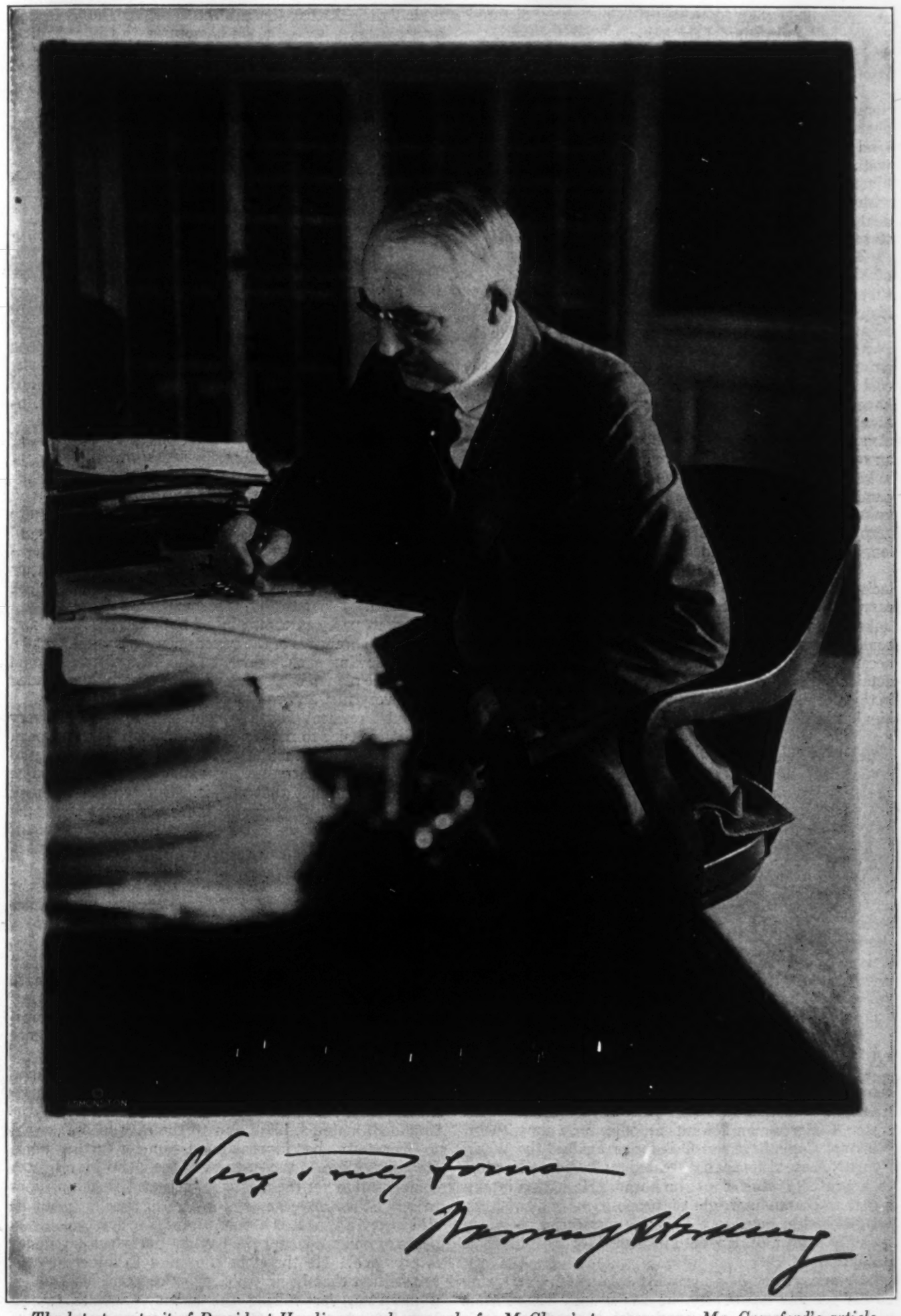
In this article by W. H. Crawford, whose interview with Secretary Hughes was a feature of the July McCLURE'S, the President is revealed as frankly confessing that his original scheme of consultation with the "best minds" has brought him confusion of counsel instead of constructive help.

What about this new President Harding who for the balance of his term will be guiding the nation's destinies with a firmer touch than either friend or foe had expected of him? In the first exclusive magazine statement authorized by the President in two years, Mr. Crawford presents a word picture of him and his revised policies.

FALSE CONCEPTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT

THE errors of judgment which the public and politicians have begun to discover that they have made concerning him are due to their overlooking certain characteristics he possesses. Chief of these is an innate stubbornness, when pressed too far. He rebels when his willingness to coöperate is construed to mean that he can be led. His belief in party *solidarity* cannot be construed to mean that he is a weak man, but that he is a just one. His willingness to recognize the constitutional rights of Congress does not mean that he will relinquish his own rights as the Executive.

Mr. Harding resents the impression that has become general concerning his character. He has frankly stated that he plans henceforth to exercise more obviously a will of his own. As a result, the standpatters are up in the air. They have a just cause for grievance. Did they not install a man in the White House on the distinct



The latest portrait of President Harding posed expressly for McClure's to accompany Mr. Crawford's article

understanding that he was to follow their dictates? Somehow he has slipped the halter. They have not yet decided whether they shall attempt to coax him back into the stall—or get another horse.

Recognizing that the political machine was not functioning as had been anticipated and as Daugherty had guaranteed, and greatly interested in finding out what kind of political cloth it would turn out after its readjustment, I went to the White House to ask the President himself just what we might expect. As a result, I present with his permission the authoritative opinions of President Harding upon current topics of political interest as stated just before he started on his Alaskan trip.

To begin with, I must mention one false conception of Mr. Harding which he took pains to set right. It is that he is a reactionary. It is popularly supposed that his natural tendencies are against liberalism and against organized labor. The standpat wing of the Republican Party was very much disappointed when he did not use strong-arm tactics to break the Labor Unions during the coal and railroad strikes last summer. They would not have made this mistake of judgment had they studied his early record. In it, they would have found that he has always been a sympathizer with labor. Marion, Ohio, is an open-shop town. Its manufacturers have succeeded in keeping the Labor Unions out. The President's newspaper, *The Marion Star*, however, is unionized; not only unionized, but its office is the home of the Marion Typographical Union. President Harding recognized labor long before he had any idea of entering national politics.

The people have a mistaken idea about the President's lack of industry. He is currently believed to take life easy and to spend more than half of his time on the golf links. It will surprise you to learn that Mr. Harding could not hold a membership card in any Labor Union, because of his extra working hours. Let me give you a detailed account of his average day. He arises at seven in the morning, for fifteen minutes takes exercises to keep him in physical trim, then goes to his study and carefully reads the local morning papers. With a newspaper man's keen eye, he senses the public opinion, making notes of the news which is of interest to the executive.

He finishes this work and his breakfast shortly after eight o'clock and is at the executive offices long before any one else, except the Secret Service men who are on the job to protect him. Immediately he begins signing the papers which he has ordered prepared the night before, after carefully reading them to see that no errors have slipped in. He brings with him from the White House the bills and documents with which he has wrestled the previous night. By this time the clerical force has arrived and he dictates his decisions to them, having investigated each individual case.

President Harding's Fifteen-Hour Day

APPOINTMENTS begin at half-past nine. They are on every conceivable subject. A committee wants the President to support the XYZ bill; Senator A comes to advise about the political conditions in his state. Congressman B wants an office for a constituent. National Committeeman C is for or against the World Court. These visits are not treated by President Harding as a formality which must be borne. He listens intelligently and carefully weighs the propositions of his visitors. Sandwiched in between callers, his secretaries present a constant stream of papers to be signed, or matters to be passed upon.

By one o'clock he is mentally exhausted, but, owing to his genuine hospitality, he has usually asked some visitor of the morning to lunch with him. During this period they discuss the subject in which the visitor is interested. At two o'clock he returns to the executive offices and continues his exacting duties.

On two afternoons a week, at the express command of his physician, the President goes to the golf course for about three hours. On his return he signs his mail, which takes him until nearly seven. Then dinner, which is over by eight o'clock. And now comes the hard work of the day. President Harding takes all the papers bearing on the subject which he must decide on the morrow and retires to his private office, where, without interruption, he works until long past midnight.

From eight in the morning until one at night, with two hours off for meals, means a fifteen-hour day. Deducting the hours he plays golf, this makes an eighty-four hour week! Compare this with the working hours of your business man or banker! Labor strenuously objects to working more than forty-four hours a week. Yet the newspapers have given out the impression that the President is neglecting his official duties. They publish accounts of his golf games, but make no mention of the days he spends at his desk, or of his nights of uninterrupted toil.

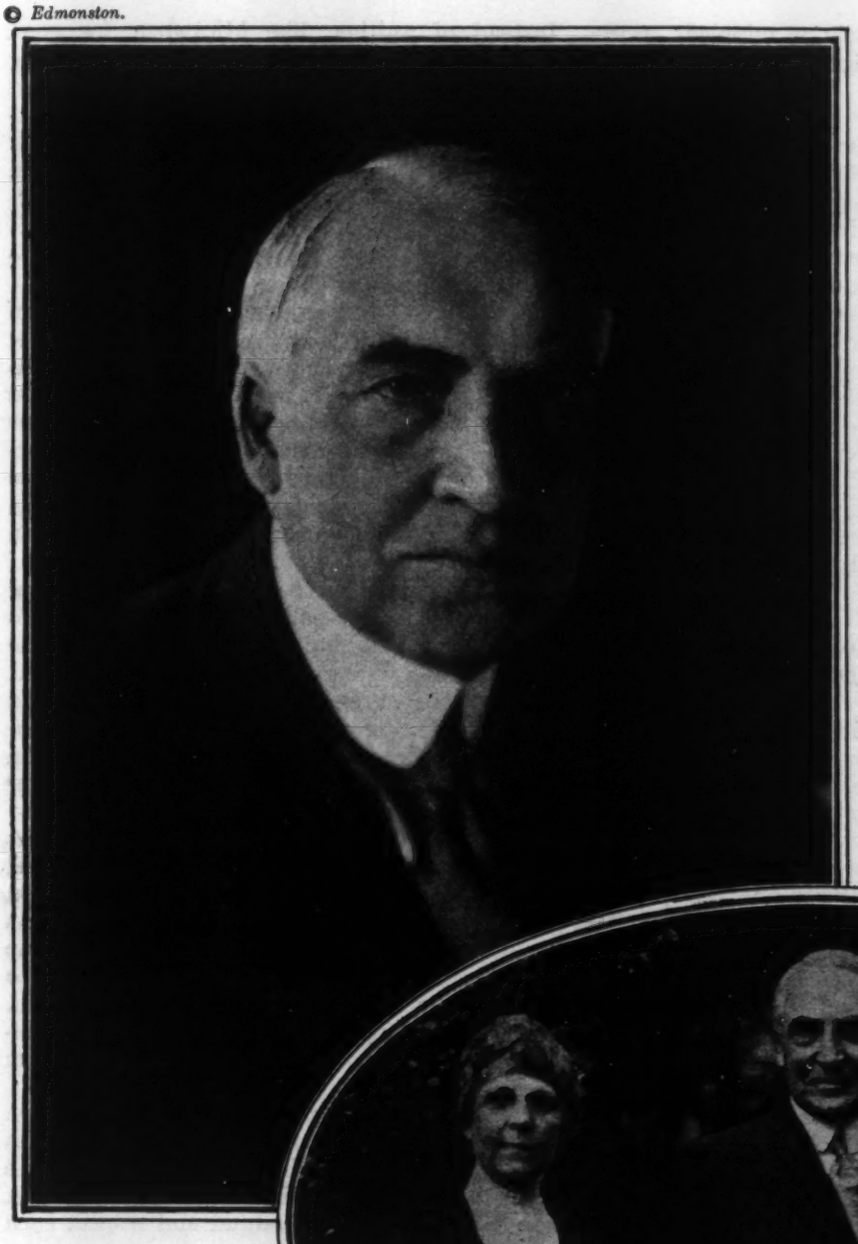
Difficulty of His Task as Chief Executive

MR. HARDING has come to the conclusion—and frankly says so—that being President is not quite as easy a job as he thought it would be three years ago, when he confidently declared that running the government was as easy as "falling off a log." These are not his words, but the slang exactly explains the opinion which he then held. Theoretically, it seemed extremely easy for a victorious party in command of both the executive and legislative branches of the government to work in unison, while allowing each branch to fulfill its Constitutional rôle. The plan of consulting with the best minds sounded like a very just and workable policy.

But President Harding confessed to the discovery that it is easier to find critics than constructive helpers. He still believes in majority rule—that it is the duty of the executive to carry out the will of the people, when he can find out what that will is. But *there* is the rub; everybody has his own panacea for curing the ills of the body politic—but each prescribes a different treatment. The task of finding the right course is not as simple as it looks. The President now thoroughly appreciates ex-Secretary Fall's ironic statement that all the President has to do is to balance the government's budget, reduce its taxation where it ought to be reduced and increase it where it ought to be increased; to demobilize its armies, scrap its navies, restore the gold standard, doctor up international exchanges and put an end to the menace of militarism, without enthroning the piffle of pacifism; insure the coöperation of nations and the peace of continents without detracting from the sovereign independence of any state.

The President told me he had not changed his opinion concerning the bonus. There is no one who recognizes more strongly the government's debt of honor to the wounded, maimed, blind and to the man whose service to his country has incapacitated him for further work. He also recognizes the justness of the claim for adjusted compensation for the men who sacrificed their positions to serve their government for a meager salary; but he still believes that it is a poor business policy to contract debts or obligations for the payment of which no money is provided. He therefore continues to adhere to the proposition that he will not sign the Bonus Bill unless a provision for raising the money—a sales tax—is included. As the next Congress will be more opposed to

© Edmonston.



© Underwood & Underwood

(Above) The new President Harding, after over two years of arduous labor as Chief Executive, frankly confesses that his job has proved much harder than he expected. (At right) The genial Harding of Campaign days shown here with his wife and his father

a sales tax than the last one, there is little hope for the soldiers' Bonus Bill meeting with his approval.

My personal opinion is that Mr. Harding has shown plenty of backbone and a meager amount of political judgment in the stand which he has taken. Four million votes will make a powerful showing in the next Presidential election. Yet Mr. Harding has withstood the pressure of the soldier vote and of the Republican politicians who want it passed for political reasons; because he is unwilling to adopt an unsound financial policy.

The President believes that taxes must be reduced. Keeping down the cost of government is his hobby. He thinks that the Budget is the correct means of accomplishing this end, and this explains his deep interest in the subject. The last act of the Wilson administration was to veto the Budget—Harding's first act was to sign it. General Dawes saw the President more frequently than any Cabinet officer, and was closer to him. General Lord, Dawes' successor, is closeted with him twice a week for several hours. During that time they discuss all possible means of saving the government's money. The President has at his finger tips the minutest details of how the money to support the government is to be raised and how it is to be expended. He demands that the balance be on the right side of the ledger.

The President discussed his belief in the World Court and his determination to make the fight of his life for it. Not only does he believe in it himself, but evidence which has come to him from every part of the country and from every element of the people shows an overwhelming public sentiment in its favor. He finds that public sentiment favors not only "a" court to settle international disputes, but is willing to accept the court which is already established and to which most of the nations of the world have already subscribed.

The President believes that it is a representative, impartial and able tribunal. He does not believe that a more satisfactory court could be established under any other plan. He doubts whether the other nations would take kindly to a suggestion from us that we were willing to establish a court, but would not subscribe to the court which they had already set up. He regards the World Court as a separate institution, the acceptance of which would in no wise connect us with the League of Nations or bind us to any of its mandates.

There has been a great deal of agitation against the World Court from a small number of irreconcilables. The West and Middle West are supposed to favor isolation. The President thinks that both sections have been misjudged. Farmers know that they must sell their products to foreign trade. In order to do so, they must

have foreign markets. Foreign markets will be crippled until the world is stabilized, and America must assist in this stabilization.

The President has no fear of failure to secure the necessary two-thirds vote in the Senate for the adoption of his project of adherence to the World Court. The Democrats are practically unanimous in their approval and will more than make up for the disaffection of some Republican votes. Senator Lodge is generally supposed to be one of the disaffected. This supposition is based on his pointed inquiry addressed to the President, concerning the opinion of the Administration in regard to the World Court.

As a matter of fact, however, Senator Lodge has never announced his opposition to the Administration's policy and the President, himself, believes that he will support it.

In regard to foreign affairs, Mr. Harding stated that he was thoroughly in sympathy with Secretary Hughes' policies, which I outlined in the July number of McCLURE'S.

President Harding's Attitude on Much-Mooted Questions of the Day

THE President is deeply interested in internal improvements. Twenty years ago the cry was for *conservation*. The time has now come, he says, for *utilizing* our resources. Their development is necessary, but they must be utilized to the best advantage and for the benefit of the people, rather than for favored individuals. The coal business must be organized and systematized. Water power must be harnessed and industry electrified. We must, however, guard against monopolization and exploitation.

The President reiterated that he would use every power of the Federal Government to enforce the Prohibition Law. He believes it is the duty of the people to obey the Constitution, of which the Eighteenth Amendment is an integral part, and neither they nor the states have a right to say they will conform only to certain parts of it.

Moreover, he thinks the American people are behind him in his effort to enforce the law and that the question of enforcement or non-enforcement will be a prominent issue in the next presidential campaign.

Opponents of the Fordney-McCumber tariff predicted it would destroy our foreign trade. Their argument was that foreign nations have no money with which to pay cash for our goods. If they dealt with us at all, it must be through the exchange of products. The Tariff Bill would prevent them from selling to us and consequently prohibit their purchasing from us. As a matter of fact, for the first time since 1914 the balance of trade for March was sixty millions of dollars against us. Our manufacturers are buying raw products, our factories are busy, our labor is employed and America is in the midst of a business boom.

While the word normalcy has become somewhat hackneyed, the President repeated to me his belief in the potency of the policies which it indicates. Certain visionaries believe we are in for a new order of things: that the institutions which have taken years to build will be brushed aside and Utopia substituted. An equal number believe that we are on the verge of chaos. Mr. Harding thinks both are wrong. No new fantastic schemes will bring Utopia and the country is on too solid a foundation for it to collapse.

Therefore, he believes that instead of trying to find the magic formula that will correct all of our political and economic ills, what the world needs is to get back to work. Instead of waiting, like Micawber, for good fortune to turn up, we must bring it. Instead of looking for a panacea, common sense dictates that we adopt individual corrective methods for economic misadjustments. We must spend less than we produce, pay our debts and recognize the right of every man to a square deal.

The President's Efforts to Build Up Prosperity

THE President has "majored" in getting the American people back to work: striving to get the factories running at full capacity, trying to increase the government's income and reduce its outgo; seeking to insure against wars, but refusing to get entangled with other nations who do not yet believe that war is over; endeavoring to create real capital instead of fiat money; trying to lessen the burden of armaments, encouraging trade and industry, and seeking to open new markets for American produce.

In keeping with this idea, he called the Agricultural Conference, which was non-political. Its object was to make farming pay and to find out why it did not. The result of this meeting was crystallized into legislation at the last session of Congress. The President also called the Employment Conference, which likewise was non-political. Its object was to determine the proper relation between labor and capital and to establish a better understanding between them.

The War Finance Corporation was restored and to its work is due the salvation of a large part of the agricultural interests. It has loaned some three hundred million dollars to the farmer. The last session of Congress passed the Farmer's Loan Bank Bill. Twelve of these banks have been opened throughout the country and to them the government subscribed five million dollars each. This policy of correcting errors and building up prosperity does not seem to be very spectacular, but he believes it has worked.

The President is very proud of the Washington Limitation of Armaments Conference. Prior to this gathering, things were fast drifting toward war in the Pacific. Now the diplomatic situation in the Far East has cleared. The nations understand and respect each other.

The naval establishments of the world have been materially reduced and building programs stopped. The world's financial condition has been materially helped by the savings in armament. China's rights have been recognized by the other nations and the Japanese are out of Shantung and her other possessions.

The President's Views About a Third Party

MR. HARDING has no fear that the radicals will capture the next Republican Convention. LaFollette may carry a few of the northwestern states, but not enough to influence materially the nomination. Few of the liberals would follow LaFollette or any other radical into a Third-Party movement. The President is inclined to consider Ford's candidacy as a matter to disturb the Democrats rather than the Republicans.

The President is not afraid of the coming election. He believes the Republican Party will be victorious, pointing to the fact that it has never been the policy of the country to change parties during a period of prosperity. While there may be quite a number of carping critics of the Administration and a number of disappointed statesmen who expected to rule, it is results that count with the people when the time comes to cast their ballots.

Black Man Meets White in a Death Struggle on the African Veldt

Kerry and the Knobkerrie

By Hamilton Craigie

Illustrations by Jay Weaver

WAVE on wave, like an inland sea, the gray-green African veldt stretched away to a far horizon that was like a sheet of hammered brass.

There was not a living thing upon it—no movement—or, rather, there had not been since morning—a morning following a night of tension in the village at the veldt's edge, the final outpost of a civilization at present as remote as the moon.

But that morning Osborne, His Britannic Majesty's Resident for Upper Uganda, had seen through his binoculars, low down upon the horizon's rim, flashes that were like distant heliographs; they had come and gone even as he had watched, like summer lightning.

They had not been lightning, as Osborne knew, but something else—something at sight of which his dark, high-colored face had paled abruptly beneath its tan. For those twinkling flashes—seen and then withdrawn, as a curtain is drawn swiftly from right to left—had been the quick signal of peril: sunflash upon tossing spear point—assegai—brandished to the morning above the measured marching of an armed host.

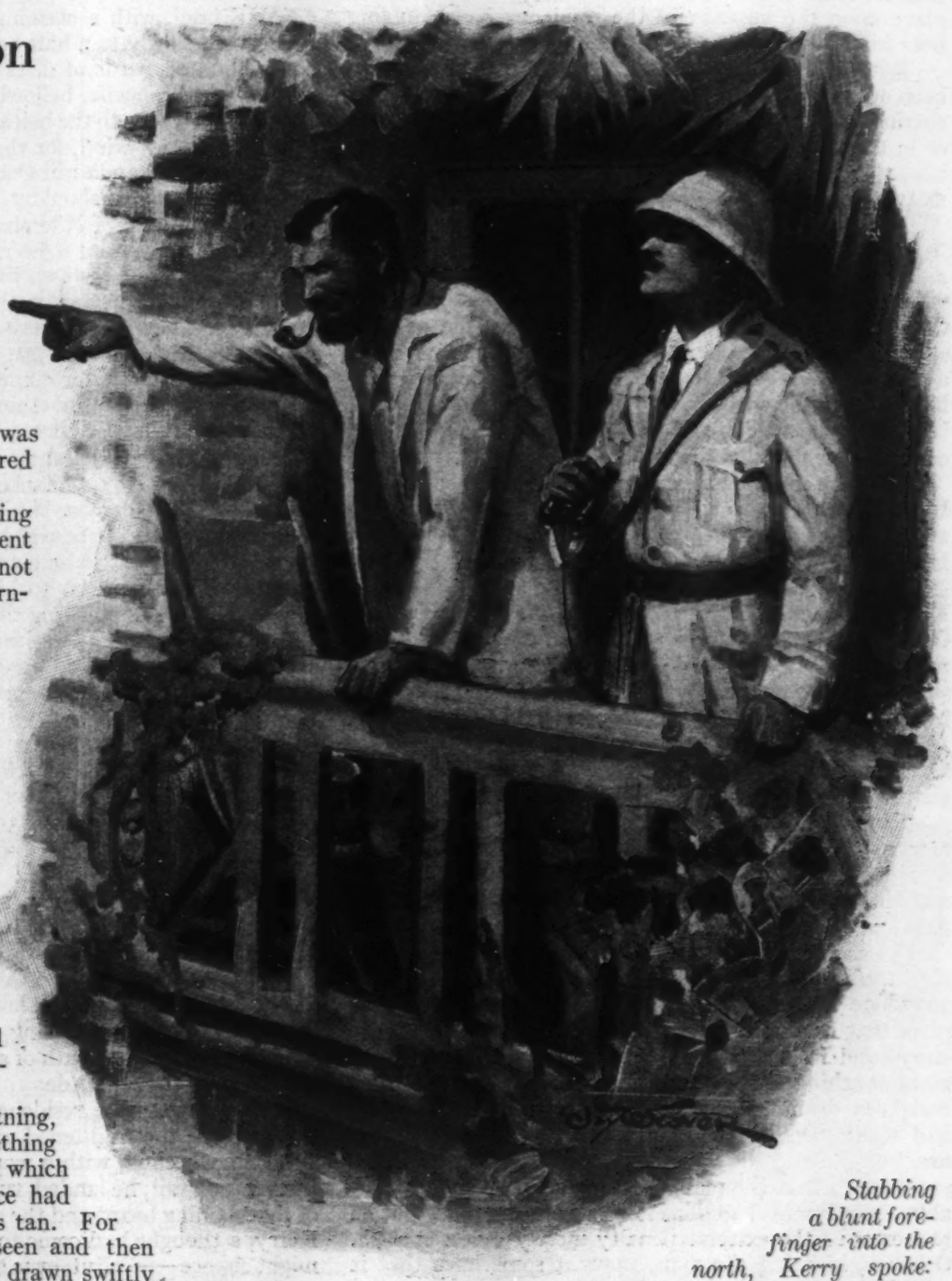
The Unyanyembi were out; Osborne had had word of their coming. More savage, even, than the impis of Lobengula, they were marching southward now, like a destroying flame, upon a region all unprepared for attack, a smiling country hard won from the wilderness, with no aid nearer than a hundred long miles to the northeast.

Osborne had put the village in laager; the wagons of the twenty white families had been outspanned, and the houses barricaded; the single one-pounder mounted at the Residency. They could hold out, possibly, a matter of days—of hours.

And after that——

Osborne, his eyes upon the compound and the white dresses of the women, groaned under his breath, turning to face the man who came slowly out upon the balcony, with the evidences of the past evening's debauch still upon him.

The Resident was a big man, but the newcomer dwarfed him by a good half foot. Loose-limbed, with



Stabbing a blunt forefinger into the north, Kerry spoke: "They're comin', y'r excellency—hell-bent, ha?"

his unkempt, bristling red beard a flaming challenge to the sunlight, he was a very giant of a man, wide-shouldered, his great barrel of a chest ridged and barred with muscle beneath the thin cotton shirt.

A laugh rumbled in his throat as he stood for a moment, staring out across the compound, great hands gripping the veranda rail, eyes blinking owlishly in the sunlight. In his dirty, white drill suit, bare-headed, he seemed what he was: an unkempt savage, oddly out of place upon the veranda of the residency—a shambling bear in contrast to the immaculate Osborne.

But Calabash Kerry, as he was known, would have been out of place almost anywhere, save as the leader of a roaring ship's chantey in a Cape Town water-front saloon, or in the middle of a knock-down-and-drag-out-free-for-all, say, on the main deck of a skysail yarder as a bucko mate.

NOW, as he stood swaying at the veranda's edge, a battered calabash clenched between his strong white teeth, there was nothing of the sailor about him. Of a sudden, under the Resident's gaze, the sagging shoulders abruptly stiffened; his hand came up smartly in a military salute; then snapped down to his side. His eyes hardened to the swift shadow in his face, as, stabbing a blunt forefinger into the north, he spoke, out of the corner of his mouth:

"They're comin', y'r excellency—hell-bent, ha? Sure. Well, I beat them to it, but they'll be here by morning, and then somebody'll catch hell *wit'* trimmin's, or I'm a Dutchman!"

The Resident frowned. The man called Calabash Kerry had come in to the compound the night previous; Osborne had not exactly welcomed him, but he could make use of him—a little. He had known the man's story; the fellow's name had been a hissing and a byword from Accra to the Straits Settlements, and beyond. And Kerry had not been in the compound an hour before a sneering reference to his history had brought from the giant swift, summary reprisal.

"Y're no *foightin'* man," he had declared, in his cool, carrying voice, as he held his tormentor by the collar, at arm's length. "Ye foight wit y'r tongue, an' I've a moind t' slice it out av ye, glory-be! An' that's whatever! Now, when I drop ye, I'd advise ye t' land— *runnin'!*"

It was characteristic of the resident, that, despite the rigid traditions of as rigid an Army code as may be found anywhere in the armies of the world, he had made it plain that Kerry was to be let alone. He had known the story, and it had been black enough: the red-bearded giant touching elbows with him now upon the balcony had been drummed out of the service, and the charge had read: "Desertion in the face of the enemy, under fire."

Prior to that the man's record had been unimpeachable; drunkenness had done it—few doubted that; but he had escaped the extreme penalty merely by an eyelash. Osborne, knowing the man, thought sometimes that it would have been more merciful.

BUT nothing of this appeared in his face as he turned coldly to the man at his elbow. When he spoke his voice was cold, dry, matter-of-fact:

"I—sent for you, Kerry, because I wanted to tell you that you can have your choice. We can expect no help here under a week, at the earliest. If you go now, you'll make it, easily; you're not—under orders, my man; you're a free agent. Now—you can have your choice."

The pipe rose at an angle in Kerry's clenched teeth.

"Ye mane—that I can *foight* wit ye, sir?" he asked. He knew that he was a free agent, indeed, but this—was something different.

For a moment he faced Osborne, man to man, eye to eye. Slowly removing the huge calabash from his mouth, he put it in his pocket. The action was symbolic. His heels came together with a click; his hand went up in a stiff, soldierly salute. The brogue had vanished.

"At your service, sir!" he said.

THE impi, with a clashing of their stiff shields, had rolled slowly to a halt before the laager. From the scant hundred yards of distance intervening the rolling rattle became a swift, bellowing thunder, a challenge, a threat, a summons to the beleaguered white men, waiting, in the cold dawn-wind, for that which was to come.

From the veranda rail Osborne, lowering his binoculars, spoke over his shoulder, without turning his head:

"It is the impi of Ndemba, the king's son," he said. "All picked men—and fighters, every last one of them."

Carstairs, his assistant, lifted an anxious face.

"We've done everything that could be done, sir," he said. "They'll wait most probably for nightfall, as you know, sir, or possibly just before the dawn. Ndemba has been ripe for it for some time now; it isn't just a raid—a foray—it's something bigger than that. It means war, and a war that will——"

"Hell!" answered Osborne, grimly. "You're right, Carstairs; there isn't a chance, unless——" He paused, considering. "Ndemba has power, and influence; he's the moving spirit of the whole thing, of course," he continued at length. "If he could be won over, there'd be an end of it; he'd keep to his agreement—at any rate long enough for us to swing the balance against him with the regulars. But—there isn't a chance!"

Before them now, as they looked, the regiment had spread slowly in battle formation, a magnificent body of fighting men, not one of them under six feet; not even the Masai were hardier soldiers. And in their van, striding with the slow strut of conscious power, a full head and shoulders taller than the tallest, nodding headdress shaken in the wind, short, stabbing assegai brandished in his hand, walked Ndemba.

HE raised his spear now, and the rattle of the shields answered it, together with the savage chorus of: "*Inkoos—inkoos!*"*

A ripple, a movement, the shadow of a sound came and went as the spears flashed upward; then, spear and clashing shield; the nearing, guttural challenge, as of hounds who bay the death of a quarry long sought, swept on and over the stockade.

From within the residency there sounded a man's hoarse oath; the frightened cry of a woman followed it. Osborne, wheeling, with a word to his assistant, vaulted the veranda rail; he landed, running. For, with the sight of that flaming beard and the great shoulders of Calabash Kerry, a thought had come to him—an inspiration, as it might chance—— But, even so, it would be touch and go.

The giant faced him with a grim, inquiring look. Osborne spoke rapidly and low, gesturing outward to the dark line of the spearmen. Calabash nodded; his hand snapped up, heels clicking together, his face on a sudden proud, exultant. Osborne, his own face set like flint, turned upon his heel without further speech. Reaching the stockade, he mounted it, held up a hand, palm outward. Then—he was outside.

A yell, savage, exultant, arose from the dense ranks of the Unyanyembi as Osborne, with a firm and steady stride, held onward. He was unarmed. Behind him now was the stockade, and such safety as it afforded; before him—peril, increasing with the seconds. The sands were

*Inkoos: chief

running out; in a moment now would come the end in the sudden onrush of that ravening tide—a quick spear thrust—— He had gone forward some twenty yards, when, like the crested foam from a dark sea, an assegai flashed upward from the dark ranks—another; but they were short.

Osborne knew well enough that if Ndemba failed to meet him on that middle ground he was a dead man even as he moved. But faith in his star, or in the red beard of the outcast whom he had left behind, held him to his course. At forty yards, marching like a soldier on parade, he halted, flung up a hand.

"Ndemba!" he called, high above the clang and rattle. "Ndemba—I come—to speak with thee! I have said."

A sudden silence fell, and with it, to Osborne, a waiting that was like a fine wire, drawn, and singing at a pitch too low for sound. The chieftain turned; Osborne could see the white of his rolling eyeballs against the black. Ndemba made one forward, halting step—another. Then he stopped; thrust lance point into the ground.

If the chieftain failed to meet him Osborne knew he was a dead man. He halted, flung up a hand. "Ndemba!" he called. A sudden silence followed

"I come, oh, white bull," he made answer, speaking in sonorous Swahili, as had Osborne.

THEY met halfway: the white man and the black. Osborne's bid for a parley had won. But even yet it would be touch and go.

Osborne had a plan, however, and the plan involved not merely himself and the savage whom he had come to meet, but another. Kerry would go through with it, though even as he went forward the resident felt that it was something he had no right to ask. But it was their only hope; he knew that to be the fact even as he flayed himself inwardly for the coward that he was not. Kerry alone of all of them could go through with it; Kerry, and none other; there was no other way.

Now the savage towered over Osborne like Buddha of the triple arms. He was a terrifying figure of a man, standing not less than six feet four; black as ebony is black, thewed like a bull buffalo, his gaze in a fierce, bright, menacing stare upon the man before him.

He grinned, as a leopard grins, exposing his filed and pointed teeth, his eyes upon Osborne, lidless, like a snake's, with a fixed, menacing, ophidian brightness. The eyebrows and the lashes had been plucked out in the sacred ceremony of *daimonu*, or disenchantment. Now, as he glanced downward, it seemed to Osborne that his eyes rolled inward with a sudden, fearful squint.

The king's son raised one great splayfoot. His lance butt rattled to the hard-packed earth.

"Speak, oh, white bull!" he said.

"Ndemba," began Osborne, "thou art strong, as a bull is strong; thou art crafty, as the leopard is crafty—is it not so? Thy kraals are full; there is much plunder to be had for the taking—they will be yet filled to overflowing. But the plunder is not here; we be poor, as thou seest. Is it not so?"

The chief grunted, and the sound was almost like a snarl. Osborne continued, as if he had not heard:

"Thou art strong, oh, Black Leopard; thou art a great chief; but—will it be said that of one man thou art afraid?"

For a moment Osborne braced his muscles for the shock. He saw the huge hand tighten upon the short, broad-bladed spear, the veins in the neck and temples stand out in ridges. Ndemba was brave; there was none braver; he had proved it, as Osborne well knew, on more than one occasion, in single combat, against heavy odds. But the resident knew, too, that there was a chink in the armor of his sullen indifference: his pride, his vanity, the savage strain that showed now in his arrogant, fierce eyes in a sudden, leaping spark.

Ndemba raised the great knobkerrie dangling at his thick, hairy wrist; it whirled in a dazzling, swift circle about his head. But Osborne did not flinch.

"I challenge thee, then, to single combat, with one whom I shall name!" His voice rang clear. "If he shall prevail against thee, thou and thy impi to return whence ye have come; if not, thine be the victory and the fruits thereof. Art thou agreed?"

TRIAL by single combat was not unusual among the Unyanyembi; Osborne knew, too, that if Ndemba should give his word, he would keep it, either way. But he waited now, with a grim tightening of the lips, as the chief spoke:

"Be it so, oh, white bull!" came the answer. "By Kali, the minister of the seven hells, the little and the big, thou speakest strong words and true. What I will do I will do."

He grinned now, in anticipation. The duel was to be with knobkerries, the savage's own weapon, a frightful instrument in the hands of a giant like Ndemba. As for the chief himself, it would be a pleasant interlude, and that was all. For, in his savage brain, he had no concept of defeat—it would not be possible. But he would abide by the result. He raised his hand in acquiescence. The deep chest tones were vibrant, heavy:

"It is well, oh, white bull. Look thou to it. I have said."

OSBORNE'S conversation with Kerry had been brief; the inspiration which had fostered his desperate cast the direct result of a something half seen and half remembered back in the days when, as Sergeant Kerry, the outcast had earned his name of "Calabash"—and a something more.

But a knobkerrie in the hands of a black thunderbolt like Ndemba! The resident's heart misgave him even as he took in the thews and sinews that, physically, might have matched the mastodonic might of the Black Leopard himself, man against man. But—a knobkerrie! To fight the savage with his own weapon—that would be a different matter.

It was hot in the compound. Kerry, his red beard like an oriflamme of battle, dressed merely in a light, athletic undershirt, trunks, and sneakers, tightened his belt with a grin as the resident spoke:

"Man—I've no right to send you out there alone to face that devil, that *loubali!* He's chain lightning with a 'kerrie'! I'll call it off; we'll take our chance with the one-pounder, and the rifles—you'll be as good as three men there!"

But something in the look of the man who faced him silenced the resident in mid-speech. For a long moment their glances engaged, as man to man, in a long, silent, understanding look. Kerry had not put it in words, but Osborne understood: the outcast would be an outcast no longer, for he would not be fighting for his own hand, but for many—if not as a soldier of the king, then in his service, at long last.

With a sudden gesture Osborne thrust out his hand; they gripped in a silence more eloquent than speech. Saluting, Kerry turned, striding toward the residency, to reappear presently with something in his hand at sight of which Osborne's eyes widened and a grim chuckle escaped him. Then, with grave face, he bade farewell to Kerry at the barrier.

The one-pounder had been trained upon the open space outside, which, empty of all life, lay like a stage set and waiting, on either hand the back-drop of the mountains in a titanic upheaval from blue to misty blue. A stage set for Titans, indeed, where presently would echo the thud and shuffle of sliding feet; the shock of blows, in as strange and weird a duel as the gray-green veldt had seen since the first coming of the Uitlanders with their squat, groaning wains.

Osborne had posted riflemen, the pick of his small force, in the event of possible treachery, but he was not apprehensive of this. Ndemba he had known aforetime; the king's son was a savage, but a savage whose word, once given, would not be recalled.

Leaping the barrier, Kerry stood for a moment in the hot sunlight, peering under his hand at the long, dark line of the spearmen, his red beard thrust forward at an angle.

A swift thunder, rising from the close-ordered ranks, greeted him, changing abruptly to a short, sharp, barking roar as a mighty figure strode forward now, the sun flashing upon nodding headdress and huge, tapering shield. Over one shoulder he swung his ponderous mace—the knobkerrie; in his great fist another, swinging to his slow, majestic, menacing stride.

Even at that distance Osborne fancied he could see the wide, snarling grin, lips drawn backward from the filed and pointed teeth; the long muscles, writhing from shoulder point to lean, tremendous flank, legs like iron columns, the huge splayfeet.

AT ten paces' distance, turning backward to the serried ranks, Ndemba flung up a hand, and a deep-chested thunder, with the clashing of the stiff shields, answered him.

They met—barbaric chieftain and red-bearded adversary—and Osborne could see that the savage was pointing to the weapon in his hand, and then to something that the white man carried, swinging lightly from one sun-browned fist.

But Kerry shook his head; then the watchers at the palisade heard on a sudden his deep, rumbling laugh. The king's son had been offering him his spare knobkerrie, but now the white man whirled—his arm went out—and the sun glinted upon a huge, brandished club.

Blackthorn against knobkerrie!

A roar reechoed from the stockade as Calabash Kerry lifted on high the ancient weapon of the kerns, the war mace of the Gael, brandished now against that other weapon of stark savagery—Ireland against the world!

They heard his challenge, then: a yell such as Osborne had heard, high, snarling, savage, as on that day when, against all comers, blackthorn whirling to the swift-play of his great shoulders, the red-bearded giant had stood alone, foursquare, upon a stricken field. That is what Osborne had remembered. And then, abruptly, they saw something else: the calabash, clenched firmly between rigid jaws.

That calabash—it was the pride of Kerry's life, inseparable from him as was the blackthorn, the shillalagh; they had formed a part of his scanty impedimenta from Cape Town to the Straits. Now, it was going with him into battle, together with the club.

Osborne stifled a quick word in his throat as the king's son, whirling his heavy weapon aloft, brought it down now in a swift, sweeping arc.

The knobkerrie is a frightful weapon; a downright, swinging blow will crush in the victim's brainpan like an eggshell. Ndemba struck with the full weight of his massive shoulders, a smashing blow aimed full upon his adversary's head.

OSBORNE could not have said how it was done; at that distance he could not be certain. He saw the great club fall—for a split second it seemed to hang motionless, above that flaming head. Then, as a boxer reads in the eyes of his antagonist the "telegraphed" lead,

Little by little the white giant was giving ground, foot by hard-won foot. He seemed a lion, beaten, only the great heart nerving his spent strength to meet the leaping onset of the Black Leopard

Kerry had acted. The blackthorn swept up and outward with the speed of light; there came a cracking thud. Kerry had picked that blow out of the air, in true broadsword fashion—for he possessed no shield.

Circling, thrusting, feinting, they faced each other warily now, Ndemba plainly respectful of the white giant with his gnarled and knotted club. He would not win this duel out of hand, then, but, secure in his magnificent strength, his skill, he could afford to wait, biding his time for the opening that would come when the white man, weakening, would abate, if only for a moment, the miracle of his defense.

LIKE hammer upon anvil now, the Black Leopard of the Unyanyembi rained down his blows; they volleyed in from every angle, with the quick, guttural "Hai—ai!" of the Zulu battle shout. And ever, between him and that crimson thatch that was like an oriflamme of battle, the blackthorn wove a bewildering passade that was like a wall, a hedge—impenetrable—weapon and foining shield in one.

As yet Red-Beard had offered no attack. A silence had fallen now on either hand—a silence in which there was heard only the thud of blows, the quick, gasping grunts, with the play and interplay of the swift, whirling weapons, in blow and counterblow.

But, little by little, the white giant was giving ground, foot by hard-won foot. There was a smear of crimson beneath his crimson mane, where a quick, glancing downthrust had got home above his faltering guard. An inch lower—and it would have written finis to the chapter.

To Osborne, watching, it seemed as if two races fought there, or, rather, two epochs; but narrowed down to this: the Sable and the Nordic—the Black Man and the White. And, for a moment, it seemed difficult to choose the savage.

Ndemba was huge, a very gorilla of a man, but for the moment, as Osborne watched, his champion seemed more a savage than a man; so must Homo Primigenius have looked, in the world's morning. Kerry's shirt was gone, his great chest with its stiff fell of hair, bare now to the sun, heaved to the sheer, slogging strength that made of the weapon in his hands a great wheel of power.

But, little by little, he was giving ground.

That long debauch—it had sapped his sinews at the last; he seemed a lion, but a lion foam-flecked, beaten, only the great heart nerving his spent strength to face that leaping onset of the Leopard, beating upon him all ways at once now with the storming onslaught of the knobkerrie that was like a writhing flame.

A groaning gasp sounded from the stockade; it was echoed by the swift Zulu yell. Kerry was down. On one knee, his face a crimson smear, he looked up now to face the doom that was upon him with the crushing impact of the *coup de grâce*. Or so it seemed.

BUT Osborne had seen something else. The calabash was gone; its broken shards shattered on the hard-packed earth, whither, by accident or design, the blow of the king's son had scattered them.

The knobkerrie swept downward with the speed of light.

But, like Antæus, gaining new life by contact with his mother earth, even as the blow fell Kerry leaped outward and away. Then, as the lion strikes, soundless and swift, he had hurled himself—muscle and mind and body, in one furious projectile—upon his enemy.

By this time he had worked the poison out, or most of it. He was conscious merely of a raging thirst, and with it a rage that moved in his veins now like a swift fire. The man before him was his enemy. Kerry had not been aware of it until that moment, it seemed, nor of the rage mounting now in a crimson mist behind his eyes.

"Ha!" he shouted, deep in his throat. And now in his hands the blackthorn became a broadsword, with the whirling play of his stiff wrist and the wide shoulders. For, if Ndemba was a master of his weapon, the Gael and his great club were one. Snarling, the king's son gave ground now, stiff-kneed, proud, with the pride of race, but now his black skin was damp with sweat.

But the knobkerrie, foining, thrusting, like a thing alive, was not yet done. A lightning feint, a backlash like the lashing of a whip—and the crushing impact of the blow had landed fair, high on the Gael's left shoulder point.

Fire-tried and tested in the crucible of adventure, his courage fused to chilled-steel in the white-hot alembic of action, Calabash Kerry had looked on death and tasted it aforetime in the far places of the earth, with the high whine of the bullets and the thunder of the guns. He staggered, gave back one halting step. Ndemba, wide mouth a-grin, had poised his weapon for the finishing stroke; it rose—and then—the red-bearded *loubali* before him appeared to leap upward and away. The blackthorn whirled upward in a flashing arc; it fell, like the hammer of Thor.

The fight was over.

CALABASH KERRY grinned through his bandages at Osborne as the resident came into the room, followed by a tall man in sun helmet and khaki.

Now, at the resident's words, Kerry flushed darkly under his tan. The tall man, a man in a high place, had come with the regulars—they had been nearer than any one had supposed. The impi of Ndemba had scattered to the winds, for Ndemba had passed on. Kerry's tremendous stroke had finished him, in the full measure of his pride. He had been the moving spirit of the uprising; with his death the impis had scattered to their kraals.

But the tall man—the man in a high place—was holding out his hand, with a smile that was like a benediction.

"Upon my word, I'm honored to shake hands with you, *sergeant!*" he said.

The dark-red flush in the giant's face receded, leaving it pasty-white. Returned to honor! For there could be no doubt of it; Osborne was smiling, too.

For once the man who had been known as Calabash Kerry could find no words. But when the tall man had gone, Osborne leaned close.

"Oh, Conqueror of the Black Leopard," he said, with a quizzical smile, "we thought you were gone, that time you were down. Tell me what happened, *then?* You were all over him in a moment? Well—what happened?"

The giant grinned. His brogue came, pure and undefiled:

"Sure the omadhaun—bad cess to 'im—he bruk me poipe!" said Calabash Kerry.

"THE MADMAN AT CORNREEF LIGHT"

In September—another absorbing story of Jim Maitland's adventures, by Major McNeile, author of "Pete Cornish's Revenge" in this issue.

Lee Takes Stock of Love

And in a Moment of Intolerable Hurt Gives up Her Lover

By Mary E. Prim

Illustrations by Robert A. Graef

IF it hadn't been for the New York hot weather—than which there is none hotter! —or a delayed train; or the dewy prettiness of a sleeping eighteen-year-old girl; or—— Ifs and ors, as you know, are the little, tricky banana peels of life. One gets under your feet and you come down with a crash. Sometimes it happens that the crash jars your sight clear. As in the case of Leonie Conway.

That night, when Lee got home from work at last, she came wearily along the uneven path and on to the porch. There she found her young cousin sprawled comfortably in the porch hammock, her eyes shut. She had borrowed a silk sweater which Lee particularly cherished. Lee glared at the tumbled garment she had bought the week before in an exclusive Fifth Avenue shop; then her glance moved upward to the sleeping youngster's face, so babyish and unlined.

"You take a look at the plans, won't you?" Don suggested, and pushed them toward her

Lee felt, suddenly, every minute of her own age, which was twenty-seven. Twenty-seven, with fine wrinkles about the eyes, a tight-drawn mouth, a sagging chin! Her heart was shaken with a gust of unreasonable anger toward this sleeping beauty. *She* hadn't been listening all day to a roomful of racketing typewriters; *she* hadn't fumed for thirty-six minutes in a packed and baking waiting room until the local crawled in—— Just then, Francie Page opened her eyes.

"Lee!" she exclaimed. "Why, I thought you had decided to stay in town, after all. Dinner's over, ages ago. I was sure you weren't coming——"

"So you thought you'd wear my sweater," her cousin completed the sentence, grimly. "Well, I am home and I planned to wear that sweater tonight. Don and I are riding to the beach."

Francie sat up, shrugging beneath the rumpled ivory-silk sweater.

"Oh, I forgot," she declared sulkily. "But as long as it's only Don. Any one'd think you had a date with the Prince of Wales!"

"I haven't seen him for a month," Lee returned. She referred, of course, to Don, not the Prince.

"Oh, well," her cousin sniffed, "think of the thousands of times you've seen him, since you've been engaged!"

"Francie, are you wrangling again?" Another voice wafted into the conversation, and the firm tread of Francie's mother sounded in the hallway.

"Lee!" Mrs. Page cried at sight of her niece. "That young one was positive you were staying in town. Come in! You must be starved." She hustled her niece into the cool, darkened house. "I'll get you something to eat in a jiff!"

SHE was off to the kitchen, nodding brightly, as the girl slumped into a chair in the dining room. Lee did not bother to turn on the lights. The dimness was restful and, besides, her eyes were smarting with idiotic, nervous tears. She needn't have snapped at Francie about the sweater, but she *had* counted on wearing it that night. Don loved her so in white. Suddenly Francie's clear, scornful voice echoed in Lee's mind: "Think of the thousands of times you have seen him, since you've been engaged!" she had said.

Lee shivered a little. So that's what Francie thought of it! And what the whole of Pleasanton thought, no

doubt! Three years Lee had been engaged to Don Ballard. She recollected that sometimes, in the midst of her eager babble about Don, she had become aware, uneasily, of her cousin's mouth twitching a little with laughter, of the half-lift of her brows. Well—three years! She sat, tensely quiet, twisting the huge diamond on her left hand.

SUDDENLY there was the sound of silver jangling against a tray.

"Now, Lee, if you'll just snap on the light," her aunt called cheerily from the doorway.

Lee stumbled to her feet.

"Oh, I didn't mean for you to carry that heavy tray in here!" She spoke with quick compunction. "Why didn't you call me?"

Her aunt put down the tray and grinned at Lee. Mrs. Page was a small plump woman, with eyes as bright as a sparrow's, and mischievous. She and her niece were great chums.

"Was it deadly in town?" she asked sympathetically.

Lee nodded wearily, and her aunt cast a shrewd glance at her.

"Tired? Well, the sight of Don Ballard may cheer you up a bit. I saw Madame Ballard downtown today," she continued. "No one could say she didn't look rested."

Lee shrugged, eyes bent over her plate. "They've been away a month."

"Isn't the train service awful?" Lee's aunt veered from the subject, none too deftly. "I do wish they'd move the city a little nearer Pleasanton. Now, don't dawdle, Lee!" she cried, with a sudden change of tone. "I can't have Don Ballard cluttering up my steps all evening."

Lee laughed aloud, her heart tingling with delight. After all, why worry over the remarks of stupid relatives when she was to see Don in a little while! Just to see him again! That would make up for the dullness and loneliness of an endless month.

When she reached her room she found Francie there, and the girl attempted to return the sweater. Lee bade her keep it, and chose, instead, an organdie of pale yellow, very effective with her dark hair and the clear pallor of her face. As she hurried through her dressing, she tried not to be too glad about seeing Don. She had a shadowy, pagan fear of paying for utter happiness with unexpected disaster. What if Don were not to come at all, that night! As if in reassuring answer, a motor horn sounded three long-drawn blasts. Don's signal—and it meant, "I love you!"

Breathless with happiness, Lee caught up her wrap and raced downstairs. They came together in the cool, hushed living room. Lee held Don off for a little moment to look at him. How tanned he was, even to his fair hair, and his eyes were like dancing sea water.

"Oh, Don, I did miss you!" she whispered, inadequately.

Don laughed triumphantly, and caught her close—close.

A FEW minutes later Lee was settled at his side in the low roadster, her heart pounding with happiness. As he drove, she stared at his grave, young profile. It wasn't necessary, really, to say anything. Just to have him there was enough; to watch his skillful brown hands on the wheel; to feel his solid shoulder brush her own. Once he half turned and met her shining glance. His face crinkled with amusement.

"Good to see you again," said Don, who was never verbose.

After that, Lee discovered silver linings in the clouds of gray dust that rose to meet the car as it rushed through the quiet suburban streets that led to the sea.

Finally they came to their own beach, which they had discovered the summer before. It was down from the road, and one followed a steepish path, edged with a tangle of wild roses, that clung spitefully to silk stockings. The beach was the merest strip of yellow sand ending in a rough breakwater, beyond which spread the endless sea.

The two settled on one of the enormous rocks of the breakwater, feet swinging carelessly. Overhead was a moon like a flat gold coin. Don clasped his knees and grinned at Lee.

"Seems funny not to have a handful of cards," he mused. "We used to play bridge about this time every night. Mother's a regular Mrs. Battle!"

"How is your mother?" Lee asked politely. Why need he drag his mother into the conversation at this perfect moment, she wondered.

"Fine!" Don told her. "She had a great time. You know she's wonderful, Lee." His voice warmed. "It's like traveling round with a dowager duchess."

Lee's half-shut eyes were seeing Don's mother—tall and big-boned; foam-white hair, beautifully dressed; searching, arrogant blue eyes——

"She is stunning!" Lee admitted aloud, involuntarily.

Don laughed. "She wants you to come to tea, Sunday."

"I'd love to," Lee murmured. Why was it, she thought wickedly, that all Madame Ballard's invitations savored of "command performances"?

BUT Don was continuing and Lee hastily collected her willful thoughts.

"Mother got it into her head that the climate here's not the thing for her," Madame Ballard's son remarked, "so she's planning to winter in the south of France, no less!"

Lee stared at him, gasping. It was so sudden; as if the calm water at her feet had dashed against her, taking the breath from her body.

"Don!" she cried. "You're going, too."

"She wants me to, Lee," he explained awkwardly. "It'll only be for a couple of months, and in the spring, why——"

"A couple of months," Lee repeated, unheeding. "Three, at the least. Me here, and you on the other side of the world."

His arms went around her swiftly.

"Don't! Do you think it'll be so easy for me? I'll be missing you every minute, Lee." His voice shook a little. "But what can I do? She hasn't any one but me. You know she never got on well with the rest of the family. She says their minds are lazy and she prods them and so, of course——"

"Your mother has had you quite a long time, Don," Lee broke in quietly. "She might think of us once in a while."

"Oh, she does think of you," Don insisted. "She thinks a darn lot of you. She's old, Lee, and we have our whole lives ahead. Be a good sport, *darlin'!*"

He laid his cheek against her hair a moment, then smiled down at her hopefully, with all his wheedling charm. Always before Lee had smiled back at him, cried out: "All right. I'm wrong. Let's not scrap. Life's too short!"

Now, by an effort, she held herself away from his chaffing tenderness. Life was too short for scrapping, was it? Well, it was also too short for going in circles, and that had been their method of travel for so long. Don withdrew a little from her, and a wall of hostile silence

rose between them. Finally, Lee tore down the wall with a small, cold sentence.

"I think I'll take that secretary job and move into New York."

"You mean you'll leave Pleasanton?" Don questioned.

"Why, yes," answered Lee. She was amazed that her voice should be so cool and steady. "Mr. MacKenzie has offered me the job several times. It means more responsibility, of course, but a lot more money; and if I take it, I can't afford to be at the mercy of this wretched train service."

"You'll leave Pleasanton?" Don repeated, aghast.

"Yes. I'll move into New York," Lee told him.

THE two of them sat very quiet then, for a long time. To all outward appearance, they were a romantic couple magicked to silence by a yellow moon. Lee's narrowed eyes, fixed on the restless, lapping water, were in reality looking at her life, forward and backward. Her heart ached intolerably, but her systematic, reliable mind was taking stock of love——

Three years and six months ago Leonie Conway, orphan, had come to Pleasanton to live with her relatives. Three years ago Lee Conway had become engaged to Don Ballard—Don Ballard, light of foot and light of heart, who had played about with so many girls; who had warmed his heart at the divine fire many, many times before, without even scorching it! Don Ballard, architect, who had designed those adorable, little Georgian houses out West Side way. Don Ballard, son of the queen-regent of Pleasanton.

Lee, sitting stiffly beside Don Ballard now, thought back to the dazed rapture of those first weeks. The plans they had made. The house they were to live in—a house of his own design. Then came the first setback. Madame Ballard had a complete breakdown, which necessitated a trip to Southern California. There had never been complete details of the illness, but Lee recollected a plain-spoken villager who had diagnosed it as "Temper-sickness!" At any rate, she had gone, and Don with her.

There followed dragging months, when she had missed him desperately. It was then that MacKenzie had offered her the secretarial position and she had indignantly refused. Why tie oneself down when Don would be back soon, and then—happy ever after!

He had come back at last, but to leave his mother just then would have killed her. Lee had not urged him. It had not mattered much, as long as there was a tangible Don, in place of scrawled letters.

Five more times thereafter Don had accompanied his mother somewhere, away from Pleasanton. Lee, staring at the moonlit water, computed with cold clarity. Now, again, Madame Ballard was to snatch him away. Don would be gone months, and she would be left with an aching, spreading loneliness for him. In the end he would return, good-tempered and casual. She would rush to greet him, humble, tremulous with gratitude. No, not again—not again!

"YOU know, this can't go on," Lee spoke at last. "Perhaps if I didn't love you so much, it wouldn't matter as it does. Each time you go, it's harder. It may not be easy for you, as you say, but you at least have different surroundings and meet new people. No matter what you think, that does distract your mind, while I——" Her voice trailed off, hopelessly.

"While Pleasanton, you mean, doesn't distract you any more," said Don curtly.

Lee stared at him, with wide, astonished eyes.

"But it's not a question of what I do," she answered. "It's that your mother, and circumstances, are thrusting us apart. When you're gone I miss you so that my work suffers—along with everything else. It's all very clear; if you go again, I shall put myself out of reach of being hurt again."

"That's just your excuse to get away from Pleasanton!" he cried hotly.

"And my excuse will serve as your excuse to go off with your mother," she flashed back at him. Neither was very coherent!

Don snorted. "It's silly to make all this fuss just because my mother wants me to spend a few weeks with her this winter."

"No! It's the accumulation of all the weeks you have spent with her and away from me," Lee explained, wearily. "It's got to end sometime. I'm willing to end it now, square and clean!"

"End what?" Don asked.

"Why, our engagement," Lee answered, a little breathless.

After a moment Don nodded, tight-mouthed, white.

"If you like," he said tonelessly.

Lee slipped off her ring and handed it to him, without a word.

Still silent, they got down from the rocks and turned toward Don's car. Above them was the honey-yellow moon; behind them, the endless, chuckling sea.

When she reached her aunt's door Lee spoke again.

"Please tell your mother I shan't be able to have tea with her on Sunday. I'll be in town, and the Sunday trains are uncertain."

Don nodded. "Good-by," he said casually, and climbed into his car.

As the motor started, Lee turned automatically. Was this really happening? She was in the right, of course, but to have him go like that, after three years! Dazed with grief, Lee stared down the quiet street, until long after the dust had settled with his passing.

IN the days that followed, Lee's aunt was very kind and very wise. She forebore to comment on the girl's bare left hand. She accepted Lee's explanation of an important new position which compelled her to move into town. She helped her pack and saw that Francie did not bother the girl with questions. At the last moment, her farewells were cheerful and matter-of-fact. She promised to call and inspect Lee's city apartment in a day or two. Lee clung to her for a single moment, before she stumbled into the train, which was to take her from Pleasanton, and all that was familiar and secure.

And then fate, having removed from Lee's life the one thing that mattered, began to shower her with all other blessings. MacKenzie was delighted to have her as his secretary. The girl who had been serving in that capacity went off to join her family in Chicago. Before she left, she turned over her apartment to Lee. Then Lee, who had taken stock of love, turned a page of her ledger of life and began all over. Work, at any rate, was left. She would work hard and some day she would have an office of her own.

By and by, too, the ever-present ache in her heart would die down, and she would laugh at a foolish, long-ago love affair. By and by, this was to happen. In the meantime, her subconsciousness continued to nudge her every time mail was distributed; and her psychic ear was cocked, so to speak, for a telephone call from Don Ballard. But no message came.

What did come, was a spell of hot weather. The entire population of New York decided to move to Long Island, and stormed the offices of MacKenzie & Garrett for desirable home sites. MacKenzie managed

"I think you're a very stubborn, headstrong girl. I'll wish you good night." Madame Ballard stood up and Lee sprang to open the door for her

to duck gracefully. He headed for a vacation in the Adirondacks, leaving his partner and his secretary to handle the crush.

Then one night her telephone bell rang! Lee sprang to her feet, her heart tingling like the bell on the wall. That was no ordinary telephone call, not that intense, continued ringing. Her trembling hand unhooked the receiver.

"Caller, Miss Conway," said the house operator.

"The name, please," Lee breathed. There was a silence, the space of a heartbeat.

"Name—Ballard," said the operator. "Coming up."

Lee swayed against the wall a moment. "The dear old idiot! I knew of course he would!" her incoherent thoughts ran. "He couldn't stay mad long, ever!"

She went blindly to the nearest mirror, and fumbled in her bag for her powder puff. As she peered in, she saw how her eyes were shining. What luck that she was wearing white! Bride-y looking! Don loved white.

There was a knock. She sprinted into the living room—flung open the door. Madame Ballard stood on the threshold. The disappointment was like the taste of bitter waters. Lee managed a vague smile.

"Oh—do come in."

Madame Ballard, very cool, very magnificent, sauntered into the apartment.

"How are you, Lee? Pretty place you have. Your aunt's been telling me about it."

She sank into a deep wing chair, while Lee fluttered hospitably about, until the vise round her heart should loose——

Madame Ballard glanced approvingly at the French prints against the cool, buff walls; the rug of old blue.

Lee, in her white frock, sat opposite in a straight-backed chair, her eyes cast down, her ankles crossed demurely, like a little girl before an examination.

"Well, Lee, what made you break off with my boy?" Madame Ballard flung the abrupt question.

Lee winced involuntarily.

"Did he send you to see me tonight?" she asked.

MADAME BALLARD'S chin lifted. It was cleft, like her son's, and proud. "Of course he didn't," she returned. "I merely wanted to know personally."

"I wondered," Lee murmured, dangerously polite. "You have always managed his affairs so well for him."

"He knows nothing of my coming here," Don Ballard's mother insisted. "You have left Pleasanton. My son has been quiet lately, and obviously unhappy. I can still add two and two."

Unhappy, was he, Lee thought. Well, she had been unhappy often enough. It was his turn now.

"I have left Pleasanton, Madame Ballard," Lee admitted, "partly because I was offered an excellent opportunity here; partly for other reasons. As to Don's unhappiness, he will have to straighten things out for himself." Then, some devil of perversity urged her to go on: "It is about time he learned to take matters into his own hands, don't you think? He can't expect to go through his whole life jerked here and there by his mother's apron strings."

Madame Ballard's keen blue eyes narrowed.

"I have told you that Don knows nothing of my coming here. I only wanted to help him. He has always been so happy and good-humored—and now he has changed. He is my only son, and I am fond of him, naturally. As for you, Lee Conway, I think you're a very stubborn, headstrong girl. I'll wish you good night."

She stood up and Lee sprang to open the door for her. Madame Ballard passed through without another glance.

For a long time afterward, Lee sat quietly in the uncomfortable, straight-backed chair. There was a taste of tears in her mouth, but she clenched her teeth to keep from crying outright. How unnecessarily horrid she had been to Don's mother!

IN the long blistering days that followed, Lee's mind was immersed in the sea of business. There were plans that went astray. There were an unusual number of querulous clients who must be soothed. Then, to cap it all, the Garrulous Bride parked in Lee's office, and chatted, and chatted, and chatted.

"Of course, we want to be as near New York as possible. My husband, Mr. James Allen, is going to meet me here at noon. He has the plans with him. They seem awfully sweet. His classmate, Mr. Don Ballard, drew them up."

Lee's heart, which she had believed thoroughly disciplined, had caught that name and was bounding furiously. The wide-blue-eyed bride talked on.

For a moment Lee permitted herself the luxury of speculating over the matter. Apparently Don was no longer tied to his mother's apron strings. He was going on with his profession.

Thereafter, Lee's heart actually did learn to behave rationally. It no longer acted like a jazz band gone wrong, when a tall, square-chinned man came toward her, on a crowded street. She learned to enjoy New York and herself—after a fashion.

And then one day Don Ballard walked into her office. In that cataclysmic moment Lee discovered how her heart had been kidding her. At once it began to whoop and cavort outrageously. Fortunately, her face did not betray her. She managed a smile of graciously tempered welcome, and gave her caller cool finger tips.

"You've come about Mrs. Allen's plans, I suppose," Lee remarked to her ex-fiancé.

He put down the roll of blueprints he carried and nodded. He was businesslike enough! Would she always love him with that breathless ardor, she raged inwardly, and he be so cool? It wasn't fair! It wasn't fair!

"These aren't Mrs. Allen's plans," the man returned. "They're plans for the old Mendum Place. I'm doing it over. You remember it, don't you?"

Did she! That low wandering house of stone, with a gray roof, buried in ivy and climbing roses; ringed with blossomy apple trees in spring; set in green fields that sloped down to a stone wall. Did she remember it!

"Of course I remember it!" She exclaimed.

As Don spread the plans out, Lee noticed that his face was graver, leaner, less boyish, somehow.

"I shall put in lattice casement windows," he went on, "and a walk of flagstones. I'm thinking of throwing together the old parlor and dining room and making one big living room. The walls are to be paneled."

The girl leaned forward intently. "And lose that lovely sprigged paper!" she cried. "And tear down that funny low mantel! I suppose you'll also block up the kitchen fireplace and put in a large coal range!"

She was flushed and breathing hard. It was bad enough to have Don Ballard walk into her life thus casually, but to have him display blueprints of the desecration of that cherished house! She looked up at him, and became aware that he was grinning at her—a grin that was at once audacious and pleading.

"All right, we won't block up the kitchen fireplace," he agreed, "and we'll keep the sprigged paper. Anything else?" he inquired politely.

Lee became coolly professional at that. "Perhaps you'd better wait for your client before we discuss it further."

HE frowned judicially. "My client is a difficult person."

"Really," said Lee, without much interest. She wished he'd go. Her treacherous heart was still bubbling happily. It would be difficult to tame it—later.

"You take a look at the plans, won't you?" he suggested, and pushed them toward her.

She took them from him, glanced down, looked intently, then frankly stared. The neat white letters of the blueprint announced:

PLANS OF A HOUSE FOR LEE BALLARD

The clear letters suddenly blurred before her eyes.

"Would you be willing to try my new plans, Lee?" Don asked humbly. "And would you give me another chance? I—I've missed you so horribly!"

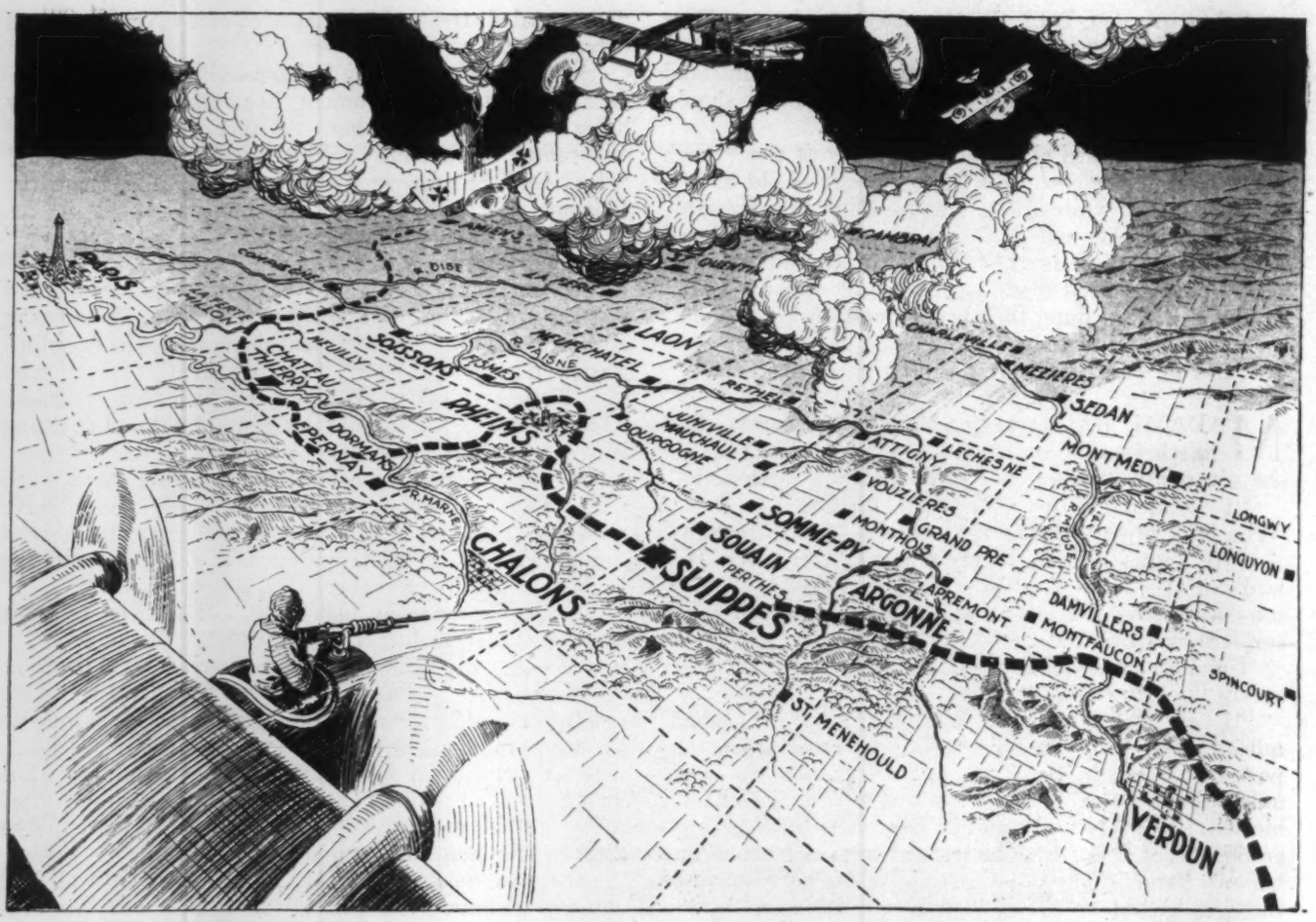
For an eternity, he watched her fingers smooth out his plans. "Your mother—what does she think?" Lee said at last.

Why drag his mother into the conversation at such a moment, Don thought. Oh, well, girls were queer!

"Oh, my mother," he returned. "Why, she's been very keen on you lately, for some reason or other. She says she likes a girl with spirit!"

Lee's eyes were dancing behind a thicket of lashes.

"You have something of mine, I believe, Mr. Ballard. A platinum ring, set with a solitary diamond——"



The Champagne battle region. In an observation tower at Somme-Py, the Kaiser planned to watch his troops smash the French at Suippes, take Châlons, encircle Rheims and make victory final

Where the War Was Really Won

The Story of a Thrilling Victory that America Has Ignored

By George F. Milton, Jr.

"*UNE belle journée pour la France*"—a great day for France—these were the exultant words of General Gouraud, the one-armed hero of the Battle of the Champagne, as he addressed his officers after the great victory had been won; in sober truth, that struggle on the Fifteenth of July, 1918, of which Americans heard so little at the time and have thought so much less since, deserves to be inscribed in golden letters on the pages of the world's history. It marked the beginning of the end of the war.

After the Champagne, there were no more German drives; instead, every day from July 18th to the Armistice an Allied force was battering away at the enemy, thinning his reserves, capturing his cannon, driving him back..

It is singular that in America this vital engagement of the war has been so utterly ignored. True, it did not have the same dramatic phases as the exploits of our Second Division at Belleau Wood, or of our First, at Cantigny. But the German Crown Prince, in his memoirs, mournfully remarks, "When this move (the Rheims-Châlons offensive) failed, I no longer entertained any doubt that matters were drifting toward the final catastrophe."

It was this little known and slightly advertised battle of the Champagne which gave the *coup de grâce* to Pan-German ambitions. It began July 15, 1918, after a troubled and tremulous Bastille Day had been celebrated throughout a France waiting with bated breath for another Hohenzollern drive.

"The Battle of the Champagne," it was called, from the broad, rolling fields over which the blue, the khaki and the field-gray tossed for three memorable days of agony and glory. When the fury of the assault had passed, the Germans found that at last they had met their masters. Their end came on the same fields where nine hundred years before another barbarian horde—the Huns under Attila—had been crushed.

The glory of the Champagne did not all go to the French. In the bloody repulse which came to the enemy our Rainbow Division took an effective part, and of all our engagements, in the Marne-Aisne campaign, at Saint Mihiel and in the Argonne, there was no other action which had so salient an effect on the course of the entire war.

In the late fall of 1917, German Grand Headquarters had realized, first, that because of the Russian debacle

vast numbers of men would be available for a final desperate attempt to break through the Western Front before the Americans arrived in force, and, second, that some new plan of assault must be contrived, to utilize these huge masses of men in a quick victory.

General von Hutier, of the German Staff, presented to Hindenburg and Ludendorf a plan that was promptly tried out at Riga, under Von Hutier's direction. It proved entirely successful.

Surprise was the main element. Long-drawn-out artillery preparations were abandoned, because they put the enemy on his guard. Instead came a short, withering fire of heavily massed guns, lasting no longer than half an hour; and then the assault of the infantry in unheard-of masses to overwhelm the enemy by weight of numbers.

Gouraud's Plan to Outwit the Germans

IT was this successfully tested plan which the Germans adopted for their spring campaign of 1918. In March they directed ninety-one divisions against General Gough's Fifth British Army, overwhelmed it and almost broke through to Amiens. The Allied staffs thus tragically learned what to expect, but seemed unable to devise a method of defense. In April and May the Riga plan again succeeded, the French lost the *Chemin des Dames*, and were forced to retreat to Château-Thierry and the Marne.

In a month the blood-bought gains of three years had been lost. The crisis forced the Allies to agree to a generalissimo, and Marshal Foch assumed supreme command.

The Germans had by no means exhausted their reserves; it soon became known that they were gathering their resources for a third and final drive. French airplanes spotted new concentrations of troops back of the Rheims-Châlons line; Foch's staff logicians put themselves in the place of the German leaders and came to the conclusion that a tremendous effort would be made to break through the lines between Rheims and Verdun.

Air photos showed new trails of tanks, strange ammunition dumps, new guns being brought into position. The heavy registration fire indicated that many new enemy batteries were coming into our sector. German divisions disappeared from other parts of the front. All the evidence pointed to Châlons as the objective of the next drive.

If Germany had her Von Hutier, France had Gouraud to trump his ace. The commander of the Sixth French Army knew that against him was coming the full and hitherto irresistible weight of the German forces. He was a famous old French fighter—one arm had been lost in colonial campaigns, and his breast was covered with medals won by feats of daring and the exercise of a keen wit. Unperturbed by the Riga method, he set out to devise equally novel tactics to checkmate it.

His plan was to withdraw, just before the assault, all French troops for a little over a mile behind the front line. Picked companies of "hostages" were to be left in the abandoned area to keep the enemy from discovering the withdrawal of the main forces. These "hostages" were to operate machine guns, throw bombs and fight with bayonets, when the Germans came over. They were "forlorn hope" volunteers. Each man threw away the fighting chance that made war tolerable for most—the gambler's hope that *he* at least would be spared. These "hostages" knew their doom was sealed—that naught but death awaited them.

Our own artillery was then registered on the abandoned frontline trenches. Dozens of reinforcement batteries came up, to aid the normal complement. In the abandoned dug-outs and trenches mustard gas bombs were to be left. Traps were dug for the enemy tanks, ingenious man-killers placed for the storm troops, hundreds of thousands of shells brought forward for the artillery, and the defense worked out to the minutest detail.

Thus General Gouraud staged his side of the battle, so that when the Germans came over, instead of joining with their foe in a few hundred yards, they would have to struggle through a mile of murderous artillery and machine-gun fire, mustard gas and man-traps, before meeting any human resistance. And when they did first join action with the poilus they would find, not a massed force on which they might inflict vast casualties, but only disconcerting, isolated nests of desperately fighting hostages, sworn to resist to the death. Fritz would be worn out, decimated, broken, before he made contact with the main force of the waiting poilus.

About nine o'clock of the evening of Bastille Day — July 14th — picked French detachments went over to the enemy lines. They found the German trenches full of men in battle equipment, with three days' "iron rations," gas masks and extra ammunition. Prisoners were taken back to the French staff, and from them it was learned that the attack was to come at daylight the next morning.

Allied Artillery Fire Surprises the Enemy

THE artillery preparation, which was to open at midnight, would play on every French trench, battery position, headquarters, crossroad or strong point that the German gunners knew of. Sweeping fire was also to be used; and at the zero hour—4:17 A. M.—this would lift, to form the rolling barrage for the victory drive *nach* Châlons.

"Francois 1-4-0" was promptly telephoned from unit

"We Took Suippes Half an Hour Ago"

A POMPOUS German Major, coolly motoring into the French village of Suippes at 6.30 on the morning of July 15, 1918, suddenly found himself a prisoner of the poilus. "*Gott im Himmel!* Suippes is *ours*—we took it at 6 o'clock!" he sputtered in astonished wrath. And he showed his time-table of the great German victory drive to prove that Suippes had already been captured!

Something had upset that famous schedule on which he, like all Germans from the Kaiser down, had been counting. General Gouraud—America's visitor this summer—had much to do with the upset; the French poilus were also to blame; and American doughboys likewise played heroic rôles in the mêlée that turned the tide of German victory.

One of the most dramatic engagements of the entire war was this final battle of the Champagne, fought just five years ago. Yet we in America have almost ignored its significance. Don't fail to read this wonderfully thrilling account of the conflict.

The Germans were gathering reserves for a final drive

to unit, and at this code order the infantry silently abandoned the "hostage" zone agreed upon. Our gunners set their sights, fused their shells, put gas masks at the alert; surgeons opened their instrument cases and rolled up their sleeves. Infantrymen snatched a troubled sleep.

Precisely at 11:15 the ghastly stillness was broken by a shot. In a second its staccato note was blotted out by a veritable storm of sound. It was the Allied artillery. Our guns had opened up on the Germans ahead of their own schedule. The skyline became crimson with the flash of guns. Overhead we could hear the rumble of heavy shells, and from far in our rear the thunder of railroad artillery sending forth its tons of slaughter.

Prisoners described to us, later, how their divisions had been stolidly waiting in the trenches that night, expecting to surprise us in an overwhelming rush, when suddenly, like a bolt of lightning from a clear sky, artillery fire such as they had never before faced crashed down upon them. The German method was for a fresh "Storm Division" to "take over" during the night of the attack, and thus have unwearied men for the advance. Our fire was so frightful that one of these new divisions, shattered and unstrung, had to be withdrawn to the rear, the tired unit which had just been relieved taking the place of the fresher, but demoralized storm troops.

From the mountain of Rheims to the Argonne forest similar punishment came to the field-gray lines waiting for zero hour. Yet they waited, with characteristic German patience, for 4:17 A. M.—and then came over. With them were tanks, bombers, grenadiers, machine gunners, flame throwers; and over their heads sang streams of German shells.

The Boches Find Living Death

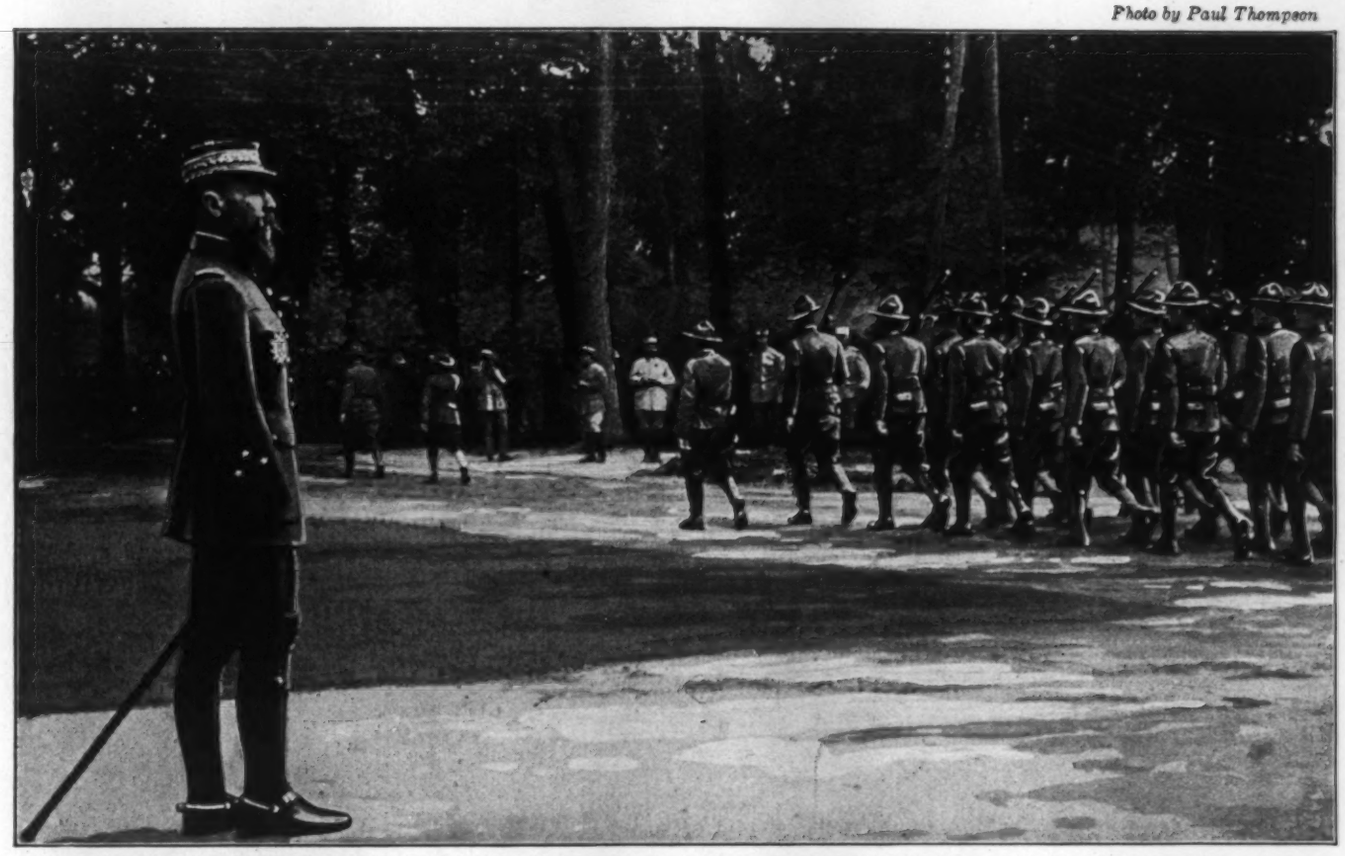
THEY had not gone far when a few began to detect gas; and on went their masks, hard for vision, hard for breathing, hard for endurance. The French trenches were not 200 meters away, and the attackers expended some of their precious energy charging on the empty trench line. "It must be a trick; if we don't look in the dugouts, they'll come forth in the rear and cut us to ribbons," thought the bewildered Boche, who rushed into the caves, to find living death, but no living enemy. Mustard gas burned them, hand grenades burst as they stumbled about; mines brought the dugout walls down upon them—an unseen hand was dealing out swift death to the attacker, who had no one on whom to wreak vengeance. Baffled, the gray hordes forged on through the storm of French and American shells.

Now the "hostages" spoke. All that these devoted French poilus could do was to thin and demoralize the German line as it approached and enveloped them. They knew no aid would come, or could. But with what skill and heroism each man put up his last fight! The clumsy Hotchkiss was operated at top speed, minute after minute; when it jammed, rifle butt, bayonet, knife or fist came into play. They took from Fate—and the enemy—full recompense for their own offering.

After the attack cautious scouts went out from our

Alabama, Iowa, Ohio and New York joined the fight

Photo by Paul Thompson



General Gouraud, Commanding Officer of the French Sixth Army and of the Rainbow Division during the fighting of July, 1918, when the last terrific German drive was smashed. General Gouraud is shown above, reviewing some of the American troops who later helped him stop the Kaiser's Champagne onslaught and who this summer have welcomed him on a visit to America

lines; the Germans had withdrawn to their own trenches. About the "hostages," lying dead at their guns, were scores of slain Germans, who had balanced them on the books of war. In one instance, seventy-nine of the enemy were counted about three French gunners.

American Khaki Enters the Mêlée

BUT, paying this toll, the endless waves of Germans rolled on, through high explosive and mustard gas, on to the first line of resistance. The German barrage had been lifting, minute by minute. As Fritz neared the French, it perforce lifted from their trench line. The poilus rose from the bottom of their fire trenches, dragged up their rifles, fixed their bayonets, made ready their grenades and manned their machine guns. So, all up and down the line, began at last the real resistance—the culminating defensive struggle of the war.

Both sides fought like demons, with rifles as clubs, with bayonet, knife and hand grenade. Machine guns, heated cherry red, jammed, were cursed and repaired, or thrown away. There seemed to be endless waves of Germans crossing those shell-swept fields. At some points they broke through the first line of resistance, at others they were stopped. But as they came on, more blue-clad French arrived, and then the American khaki entered the mêlée.

At the point where the Alabama boys—the 167th Infantry—were stationed, the French had broken under the repeated waves and the Germans, rejoicing at their victory, were advancing at the double. Alabama clambered from the trenches with a wild rebel yell, and charged the charging Boche, throwing them into rout and capturing five hundred prisoners. Elsewhere in the line Iowa, Ohio and New York were taking care of their own troubles. At the start, the American troops had been in support, but as the battle grew more desperate they hastened into action.

Thus the first day passed, the lines swaying back and forth, both sides fighting with incredible ferocity, until, at last, we knew that the German waves had been beaten off. A temporary lull of several hours ensued, in which there was time to evacuate the wounded to dressing stations in the rear, serve a little food and have a general check-up and taking of positions. Reinforcements were fed to weak positions, ammunition supplied and things made ready for a renewal of the attack.

Come it did, with the initial fury, but without the sustained intensity of the early morning. A depth of a half kilometer marked the farthest gain in the second attack. More quickly than before, the Germans gave it up. Intermittent attacks flared up for the next few days, some locally successful, others undone by savage counter-attacks. Division after division shattered itself on the blue and khaki line. At last they ceased to come.

Strategic Importance of Gouraud's Victory

THIS bare outline of the battle gives a glimpse of the strategic importance of General Gouraud's victory of July 15th; before it, the enemy had in reserve many divisions of fresh troops, ready to be thrown at some unknown part of our line and perhaps to break through and overrun central France. He had chosen for his effort the Champagne just because it was so unlikely that he would do so, for here the French were more strongly entrenched than anywhere along their front. His main attack was directed against that portion of the line between Rheims and the Main de Massignes, 68 kilometers east of Rheims. There had been a secondary

drive—the second Battle of the Marne—on the other side of Rheims, in the Château-Thierry salient, for the purpose of diverting Allied reserves.

The Struggle That Saved Suippes

THE main attack failed, but the feint was surprisingly successful, the long salient being further stretched forward until the Marne was crossed at Dormans. This local gain, however, availed the enemy little, for, seek as he would, there was no opportunity for employment of enough troops to break through the Franco-American line, while from Souain to Suippes his reserves had exhausted themselves against Gouraud's wily defense.

It was near Suippes, from the top of a fair-sized hill, that I was fortunate enough to observe part of the second day's battle raging not five kilometers away. There, spread before me, was a rolling plain, culminating about four miles away in a series of small hills, in front of which had been the German lines.

Suippes was about two kilometers this side of the Boche jumping-off line. They came within a hundred meters of the town, but no farther. On their time-table of advance, starting at 4:17 A. M., they were to be in Suippes by 6 A. M., and in Châlons at five that evening. But this time-table was something like that of French railroads—not quite up to schedule. A German major rode into Suippes at 6:30 that morning, in a fine gray car, escaping in some lull the machine-gun fire. He got out of the car and never was there a more astonished man than he when he found that he was a prisoner of the French.

"*Gott im Himmel!*" he sputtered. "*Suippes ist unser platz; wir haben es gefangen eine halbe stunde vor!*" ("God in Heaven! Suippes is ours; we captured it a half hour ago!") he said, looking at his time-table for confirmation.

From my hill, with the aid of glasses, I could see bits of the struggle that saved Suippes. Puffs of smoke arose above the dust; dim, confused struggles were visible occasionally over the plain, when the smoke cloud lifted—groups of Lilliputian figures, squirming, clawing at one another, falling, rising up, dying. It was easy to see that the German plans had miscarried badly. It was then the sixteenth of July, and their line was supposed, according to their time-table, to be some kilometers back of my vantage point, instead of in front of it. They had come two kilometers, instead of thirty. Their last big push hadn't pushed. The battle was lulling.

That night the enemy attacked once again in the Suippes region, but with less vigor than before, and was easily beaten off. About noon on the seventeenth he made his last endeavor, with little heart. We heard from prisoners taken in the next day or so that his divisions were being drawn out and loaded on trains to go to the Marne sector. The German High Command had apparently accepted its failure. The Battle of the Champagne was at an end.

An amusing feature of the battle, which we learned from prisoners, was that the Kaiser and Crown Prince had been spectators.

The High Command, it appeared, had been so confident of the break-through that it had constructed a big concrete watchtower near Somme-Py, from which the imperial observers, expecting to watch the victory, saw their last great effort smashed.

Significance of the Battle of Champagne to the Allies

ON the front of the Sixth French Army one American, one Italian, six French divisions and a Polish brigade had successfully blocked the assault of nineteen German shock divisions and ruined the grandiose plan of the Germans to break through the Champagne, capture Châlons and cut the French armies.

Marshal Foch had not dared attack so long as the German threat was unrepulsed. But when the third drive failed so signally, it was safe for him to assume the offensive. So it may fairly be contended that at the Battle of the Champagne the Germans lost their chance to win the war. Their reserves were exhausted. Their morale was shaken.

Psychologically and physically from that time the initiative passed from the German to the Allied command. Marshal Foch's orders of July 18th were made possible, and thereafter came our relentless pounding at the retreating Germans, until the would-be conquerors of Europe ignominiously gave way to the Allies in the Armistice.

As Carmen danced to the strumming of her brother's guitar she was all woman—elusive, mysterious, tormenting

Fliers' Luck

Lieutenant Sleepy Spears Encounters Romance on the Border Patrol

By Thomson Burtis

(Author of "The Sky Sheriff")

Illustrations by Harold Anderson

THE sun's rays, already charged with warmth at nine o'clock in the morning, entered the little square tent through the open flap and made a golden splotch on the bare, uneven floor within. The clumping of two pairs of boots on the boardwalk outside undertoned laughing voices which appeared to disturb the motionless figure on the cot not at all. The vague, far-away hum of a motor grew suddenly into a roar and then into a series of deafening detonations as a De Haviland, its big twelve-cylinder Liberty motor running wide open, swept across the line of tents, tilted, and started to circle the tiny airdrome. The eyes of the sleeper did not even quiver.

Scarcely had the roar of the ship died away when metallic clamor reverberated from the walls of the tent. In instant answer to the shrill summons a long arm projected slowly from the blankets, and the hand at the end thereof found its unerring way to the battered tin timepiece which was set on a box at the head of the bed. The alarm died into protesting silence, and Lieutenant Sleepy Spears, Air Service, United States Army, turned from his side to his back, raised his heavy eyelids, grunted, and then threw back the blankets with deliberation.

His bare feet swung to the floor, hitting the waiting slippers with exactness. Another deliberate movement resulted in swathing himself in a brown bathrobe which was evidently drawing toward the twilight of an eventful life. He picked up toilet kit and towels and emerged into the hot Texas sunlight. He squinted at the sky, as every experienced airman automatically does each morning, and then made his slow way down the boardwalk to the bathhouse. His stocky form was slightly bent, and his eyes rested on the ground. Above the square, deeply tanned face his brown hair was in wild disarray. Every line of his body expressed utter languor.

Under a stinging shower of cold water, however, Sleepy was galvanized into life. To the tune of a cracked and raucous voice which he uplifted in song, he danced briskly under the water. Long, whiplike muscles rippled smoothly underneath the skin, and in every effortless motion there was catlike power.

HIS return progress was equally deliberate. The field at the end of the boardwalk was astir with the business of the day—three big bombers on the line were receiving the ministrations of a half-dozen mechanics, a gang of overalled men were painting one of the corrugated iron hangars which bounded the airdrome on the eastern edge, and a truck was trundling clumsily down the road which skirted the southern border of the field, separating it from the line of frame administration buildings. Behind the buildings were the small tents

which were living quarters for the dozen young men who composed the McMullen flight of the border patrol.

Dressing was a leisurely process which involved frequent searching for necessary apparel, as well as reflective pauses for no observable reason. The tan-silk pajamas were deposited under the pillow, and the bathrobe found its way into a corner, on the floor. Later an O. D. shirt was unearthed from beneath it. Trousers were in another corner, and it took three minutes to locate a pair of boothooks underneath a pile of magazines on a chair. The publications indicated a far from restricted taste in literature—several *Police Gazettes*, a literary monthly, a number of all-fiction magazines, and one flamboyant motion-picture sheet were swept carelessly to the floor, revealing the necessary boothooks.

HUNG by safety pins from the straight canvas sides, just below the seam where the pyramidal roof angled upward, were a series of pictures, evenly divided, like Gaul, into three parts: prints of Frederic Remington's best-known paintings, photographs taken from the air, and pictures of dazzling young women whose charms were dimmed by no excess of clothing.

As Sleepy pulled on his boots a moment later a cracked falsetto voice from the next tent reached his ears.

"Under a Belgium water tank the young observer lay," were the distinguishable words of the song, petering off into a vague series of noises blurred by sounds of vigorous sweeping. Molasses Mulberry, orderly-in-chief for the flyers, was at his morning tasks.

As always when Private Molasses Mulberry was about, Spears' generous mouth widened into a whole-souled grin. More than six months before, at a California field, Mulberry had been his orderly. Then Sleepy had been ordered to Donovan Field and later to the border. Just a month ago Mulberry had shown up at McMullen. He was a lanky, entertainingly useless specimen, was Molasses, and totally unfit for any duty but the one he was now performing. Nevertheless, Molasses was a man of parts.

Sleepy was searching uninterestedly for a black necktie wherewith to garnish his shirt when a long, thin, black face was thrust through the tent flap.

"Mawnin', lieutenant. The lieutenant is just the man Ah want to see," announced Mulberry, stooping low to get in. Then he straightened to the attitude of painful attention in which he invariably addressed an officer, although in this case dustpan and broom detracted from his dignity. Despite the heat and his duty, he was adorned with a tightly buttoned blouse. A white stock—in fact, several of them—projected above the collar. When in full uniform Mulberry was accustomed to wrap several stocks around his long, thin neck, in order that the blouse collar might be reasonably well fitting.

"Molasses, you're drunk again," Spears accused.

The wearing of a blouse was Mulberry's chief manifestation of alcoholic stimulation, but it appeared that for once it was misleading.

"NOSSAH, lieutenant, Ah ain't had a drap. Ah'm expectin' a lady out t' see me this mawnin', and that's one o' the things Ah wanted to see the lieutenant about."

Spears lit a cigarette and seated himself on the touseled cot.

Mulberry batted his eyes rapidly, and cackled nervously. His melancholy face was the reflection of a soul steeped in woe, saddened by the buffets of a cruel world. He smoothed his kinky black hair nervously and cleared his throat, and, clutching his broom firmly at arm's length, he smiled a sickly smile.

"What Ah wanted to see you about was this, lieutenant: Ah hear Ah been transferred to the radio department, when Ah been in the engineerin' ever since Ah been here."

"What difference does it make?" asked Sleepy. "You'll be orderly just the same. It's just on paper—every man's got to be carried in some department, even if he is on special duty."

"Ah don't like it," persisted Molasses stubbornly. "Ah been in the engineerin' all the time, and now they transfer me to radio. Lieutenant, when a man's forty-seven years old you know that's too late in life for him to change his perfession!"

Sleepy nodded gravely, his square face showing that he appreciated fully the seriousness of Mulberry's predicament.

"I'll see what can be done, but you'd better shake a leg and clean these tents up right or you'll have a complete change of profession. You make a bed like I make love—without any regard for the finer points."

"Well, Ah kind o' been under a strain," said Mulberry, and then a self-conscious smirk spread over his long face. "Lieutenant, Ah'm fixin' t' git married."

"By Jove! How come, Molasses?"

"Ah been a-hellin' around long enough. It's time Ah was settlin' down." Molasses shook his head sadly in deprecation of the fact that he had been a gay dog.

"Who is the lady?" queried Spears.

"She's a widder in town. She's a fine, big woman."

"She's the lady that's coming out this morning, I suppose?" Spears asked.

"Yessir."

"And when does the happy event come off?"

MULBERRY twisted uncomfortably and inserted a long forefinger between stocks and leathery neck.

"Well, it ain't quite understood, yet," he admitted finally. "That was what Ah wanted to see you about—the other thing, Ah mean. Y'see, Elviry is a right partic'ler woman, and Ah been kind o' tellin' her that Ah flew kind o' more than what Ah rightly do. Really, Ah ain't never been up. Ah was wonderin' whether the lieutenant would mebbe take me up fur a little hop while she's here. It'd help me out quite some, lieutenant."

"I guess we can fix it up. I've got the eleven-o'clock patrol west—if you step on the gas and clean this tent so I can see my face in the floor, I might be able to get you in on that flight. Be on the line at eleven o'clock."

Sleepy perched a huge Stetson on one side of his head, and moved toward the door, followed by the grateful words of Mulberry, who was now leaping to his task like a flurried giraffe. Spears lounged slowly toward the mess hall.

He found the Chink in the kitchen. He was known variously as Sing Hi, Sing Lo, and Sing Loud, and he now earned his last-mentioned cognomen by starting voluble protests when he saw the flyer.

"Shut up, you jaundiced heathen," commanded the grinning Spears, "and hit that frying pan right in the eye with two large, fresh pieces of hen fruit."

"Allee same eggs?"

"You comprehend me perfectly. And two strips of hog."

"Allee same bacon?"

"Right. And coffee. *Pronto!*"

Sing grinned, slid off, and shortly obliged with the designated nutriment. While Sleepy was consuming it thoughtfully at one end of the table the stocky bow-legged form of Captain Kennard hove into sight. The captain was charged with the task of handling twelve fractious flyers, a hundred or so mechanics, and some three

hundred miles of Mexican border, which form a considerable combination. At sight of Sleepy his face wrinkled into a grin which was one of the secrets of his reputation as the best squadron commander on the border.

"When you weren't in bed I figured you couldn't have gone any further than the mess hall at this early hour," he remarked. "Sleepy, how in hell do you manage to run a department right to a T and never work? I wish I could catch your bunch laying down on the job some time—I'd make your joints crack like a new saddle."

"It's a gift," returned Sleepy modestly, his heavy-lidded eyes narrowing as his mouth stretched in answer to Kennard's grin. "First you collect yourself a good sergeant. Then you work — repulsive, but necessary—for a couple of weeks until he knows more about the job than you do yourself, which he probably did anyway. Then you sit back and sign your name, and have leisure for ten or twelve hours of refreshing slumber every day."

"I see. You've got the eleven-o'clock patrol west, haven't you? I don't know who to send as observer——"

Sleepy seized the opportunity, and obtained permission for Molasses Mulberry to aid his suit by making a patrol.

"I'll fly from the back seat and work the radio," Sleepy promised, as he rose from the table. "Now to work. Damned if work isn't a nuisance—it cuts into my time so much."

IT took a full half hour for Sleepy to make a complete check of matters in the supply department. At five minutes to eleven, when the drone of two De Havilands overhead indicated that the nine-o'clock patrol ships were home, Sleepy took helmet, goggles, and Colt automatic from his tent, secured emergency rations of food and water from Sing, and started for his ship.

For three months—marked by divers interesting events—the border patrol had been working from dawn to dark in an effort to stop the tremendously increased flow of narcotics which was inundating the country. The usual schedule of two, or at most four patrols a day had been increased until every mile of the country along the Rio Grande, from gulf to gulf, was covered once every hour by the roaring De Havilands, which drove their way at a hundred miles an hour across mountains, mesquite, and deserts, keeping watch over the border.

When Sleepy came up to his ship, he found it surrounded by a group of men, centering around one woman. Word had spread that Molasses Mulberry, orderly extraordinary, was to make his first airplane trip for purposes of romance, and the outfit hove to with a will to help the cause along.

A long arm found its way to the battered timepiece

The heat danced in wavering lines above the hard-packed sand of the tiny airdrome and the big hangars were turned into Gargantuan furnaces under the pitiless sun. But Mulberry—who allowed no weather conditions to interfere with properly costuming his part—towered at the elbow of his ladylove in helmet, goggles, and heavy leather coat, a Colt in its holster sagging at his hip. The soldiers surrounding them were pouring into Elvira's ears a continuous story of Mulberry's matchless ability as an airman, which he admitted with suitable modesty.

SPEARS acknowledged Mulberry's nervous introduction with a courtly bow. Mrs. Elvira Munson was, as Molasses had well said, a fine, big woman. Her round, fat, chocolate-colored face simpered coyly above solid, opulent curves. There was nothing ephemeral about Elvira.

The Liberty suddenly roared wide open. Great swirling clouds of dust arose in writhing columns as the propellers became invisible, and the earth-shaking din made conversation impossible. Gradually the noise died down and the mechanic in the cockpit turned and nodded as the men on the wings and tail relaxed from the strain of holding the bomber stationary.

"If you're ready, Mulberry?" Sleepy was deferential and deprecating.

"Good-by, Elvira. And don't you worry," said the quaking Mulberry in a voice which cracked slightly under the strain.

He folded himself awkwardly into the front cockpit while Sleepy ran the motor up briefly, peering over at the instruments in the front seat.

"Act as if you were flying, and nod to the mechanics!" yelled Sleepy, and Mulberry carried out the direction to the letter. In a moment they were trundling up the field. At the fence Sleepy turned the motor up, and threw on left rudder and opposite aileron. The big ship swept around until it was facing down the field. The pilot fed it the throttle, and locked the rudder bar with his feet. He pressed forward on the stick and the tailskid ceased dragging. With nose low to the ground the ton-and-a-half ship roared across the level field at seventy miles an hour. In the front seat Molasses Mulberry, careless of his heroic rôle, was grip-

ping the cowling with both hands, as though firmly convinced that life would otherwise elude his grasp. Sleepy was slumping easily in the rear, one practiced hand on the stick and the other draped loosely along the side of the cockpit.

He waited until the buildings loomed close, and then pulled back smoothly. Straight from the ground the De Haviland shot upward in a breath-taking zoom, just clearing the roof of the recreation building. Sleepy leveled out quickly, allowed the ship to pick up flying speed once more, and then banked. The bomber hurtled across the little group of spectators, Elvira plainly visible among them.

SLEEPY devoted two minutes to the furtherance of romance. The great craft stalled, dived, twisted and fluttered and tilted within a few feet of the ground, like a mammoth dragon fly disporting itself in the clear golden air.

With a parting dive past the onlookers, the ship turned westward and the pilot throttled the Liberty to fifteen hundred revolutions a minute. He made sure the motor shutters were open, unreeled the wireless antenna until the wire was a thin line of flashing light behind the ship, and then leaned forward. His half-closed eyes surveyed the instrument board and read the tale the needles told. It was satisfactory, and he settled back in his seat.

The ship drove upward in a gradual climb until the altimeter read five thousand feet, and then the pilot leveled off.

Sleepy kept constant watch of the country below, with eyes that held no appreciation of the familiar vista. To the south, open fields swept away to the twisting Rio Grande. Ten miles northward they merged into gray-green mesquite that billowed away to the sky line, and a hundred miles beyond. He watched for pack trains, trucks, or suspicious groups of riders near the river. It is easy to get contraband goods across the border, but transporting it northward is another matter.

He swung southward until both sides of the river were under his surveillance. Every ten minutes his free hand reached for the radio key in front of him and tapped off his report, which was received at every patrol station from McMullen to El Paso. If he should report anything suspicious, a posse would be sent in pursuit within a half hour after the report was clicked off.

MEANWHILE Mulberry had settled down to strained quietude.

In an hour they sighted the ship from Laredo, waved greetings, and turned homeward. Laredo took the next three hundred miles westward. Sleepy reported that they were on their way back, and slouched down still more comfortably. At intervals he leaned forward to read the instruments and the rest of the time his eyes, ever screened by heavily drooping lids, swept the ground a mile below him.

Half the distance to McMullen slipped behind them. And then Sleepy wiped the oil from his goggles, leaning over the side to get a good look directly below. A succession of level cotton fields and one large mowed stubble field were spread out beneath him. Suddenly his eyes focused on a tiny blotch against the light brown of the stubble field. It seemed to be a man, stretched at full length on the ground.

Without hesitation, he throttled the motor and nosed down. It was far from natural for any human being to be lying motionless in the blazing sun, and there was but one house in sight, nearly a half mile southward on the bank of the river.

The motor was turning up less than a thousand as the De Haviland dropped earthward in a sweeping spiral. Little by little Sleepy throttled the motor lower. At five hundred feet he closed the shutters and for a moment brought the Liberty to idling speed as he peered down at the prostrate figure in the field. It was a woman—her loosened hair could be seen against the stubble. She was dressed in riding breeches and boots. And she had not moved.

The motor roared wide open for a moment as Spears sent the ship in a wide circle around the field. It seemed smooth and level, and fully four hundred yards long. He flew northward, turned, shut the motor down to idling again, and shot for the field. He jockeyed the ship carefully to make sure he did not come too close to the unconscious figure. The ship stopped rolling a safe seventy-five yards from the crude fence on the southern edge of the field.

"That's funny, ain't it?" bellowed Mulberry, looking at the girl.

"Elvira won't get jealous if she hears about this, will she?" grinned Sleepy. "Let's take a look at yonder damsel. She may have been too rash with this sun."

Followed by Molasses, he walked swiftly over to the girl.

She was lying with one arm crooked under her small body, the other above her head. Spears knelt beside her and turned her over gently. She was utterly limp, and showed no signs of consciousness, although the oval face did not seem particularly pale beneath the olive skin. Her breathing was perceptible.

"NOTHING serious, I guess," remarked Sleepy, after a moment. He got his arms underneath her and lifted her easily, as he rose to his feet. "We'll take her over to that house. It may not be her home, but it's the only house in sight. Touch of the sun, I guess."

"Mexicum, ain't she?" queried the excited Mulberry.

"Maybe, but I rather doubt it," replied the flyer, as he gazed down at the face in the hollow of his arm.

The girl seemed like some lovely child—the delicate face was framed in loosened dark hair and long eyelashes lay motionless on her cheeks. Neither slim body nor finely-chiseled features were of the usual exotic Mexican type.

"Go over and turn off the motor, Molasses—no use letting it run. Besides, it might start up on us," said Sleepy, and the elongated Mulberry started for the ship at an awkward lope.

Suddenly the inert body in Sleepy's arms moved slightly. He smiled down into a pair of very large and very puzzled brown eyes.

The girl's lips curved in an answering smile, and her eyes turned toward the huge bulk of the De Haviland.

"You arre one of the flyers—yes? Thank you, but I can walk now."

"Sure? We'll see. What happened?"

"My horse—Pinto—threw me," she answered. "See? I am all right. But thank you, señor, for your trouble."

She swayed slightly as she attempted to walk, and Spears swept up his burden again.

"You are vairy strong, señor," she said, with a quick smile. "I am—deezy."

The whisper of the idling motor died as Mulberry snapped off the switches.

"Do you live in that white house ahead?" inquired Spears.

"Yes. My brother and I. If Pinto has come to the corral, he will be worried. There he comes now. But let me see if I cannot walk."

She slipped to the ground, and this time succeeded in keeping her balance.

A man came out of the house, a few hundred yards away, and hurried toward them.

"It is Juan. And you must both have—deenair with us. It will be ready."

SLEEPY'S eyes raised from their scrutiny of the ground and a smile tugged at the corners of his wide mouth.

"Mr. Gamaliel Mulberry—otherwise Molasses—and I accept with pleasure," he answered. "This is Mulberry, Miss——"

"Galvez," she finished for him. "How do you do, Señor Mulberry. Thank you, too."

"Don't mention it, miss, don't mention it," returned Molasses hastily. "It—er—it wasn't nothin'. It's—er—it wasn't nothin', Ah c'n assure you." Having brought forth these sentiments, he came to attention. "The ship is turned off, lieutenant," he reported.

"So I see. Thanks. We're having lunch with Señorita Galvez and her brother—that is, if her brother says so."

Señor Juan Galvez did say so, emphatically. He was slight and dark, like his sister, with curly black hair and a pronouncedly curved nose. He looked rather more Semitic than Mexican, and talked English with no trace of the charming accent of his sister. His eyes were small and black, unlike the girl's oversized, high-powered brown ones.

Galvez went with Molasses to the rear of the house, to introduce him to the Mexican laborers who had come in from the field for lunch, while Sleepy telephoned his report. And immediately afterward he sat down with his hosts to an excellent lunch. It was served by an aged crone whose leathery skin was the color of a weather-beaten saddle. The girl seemed little the worse for her experience, and talked volubly.

"I'm glad I didn't happen to see the pony," Spears drawled, as he made a frontal attack on the fried chicken. "If I had I probably would have figured what happened, flown down past the house here, and tried to get you rescued by signaling."

"You're on the border patrol, I suppose?" queried Galvez. "By the way, I don't believe we know your name, do we?" he added, his thin mouth curving in a smile that softened the hard lines in his lean brown face.

"Pardon. My name is Spears, and I am on the patrol."

"Not Señor Sleepy Spears?" asked the girl eagerly.

"They sometimes call me that," grinned the flyer.

Her eyes darted briefly to meet her brother's, and then were trained again on the airman. Her face was alight, eyes sparkling.

"We have haird so much about you—how you captured the smugglairs a few weeks ago—you know those two men? Was it not you?"

"Just by accident," smiled Spears.

The bomber hurtled over the little group of spectators, Elvira plainly visible among them. Her round face simpered coyly above solid curves

"You men are flying more than you used to, aren't you?" Galvez put in. "Two or three months ago I noticed only a ship or two a day, and now they come over about every hour."

"Trying to stop drug smugglers," explained Spears. "They're running us ragged. They've got the railroads completely plugged—searching all baggage—and it's up to us to see that nothing gets into San Antone by any other route."

"So I hear. I'll tell you, lieutenant, I've been on the border on and off all my life and it certainly is an eye opener to find rangers of the air, so to speak, watching this strip of wilderness."

"I think it's wondairful," said the girl, with a quick look at the lazy-eyed flyer.

After lunch Galvez led the way to the shaded veranda while his sister went out into the kitchen to give instructions to the old servant.

"You've got time for a smoke before leaving, haven't you?" Galvez asked, as they seated themselves. "I'm glad you dropped in, even if it did mean a shaking up for Carmen. It's lonesome here. Up until a year ago when Carmen left the convent I was in New York."

"I THOUGHT you talked English remarkably well," said Sleepy, adding, "It must be rather poky here for your sister."

"It is," nodded Galvez, his face serious. "But if the cotton crop pans out this year we can get away."

He gazed across the mangy cotton fields toward the ship. Two Mexicans were at work in the fields, and Sleepy wondered where they were housed. Over the tumble-down stable in the rear, perhaps.

"Carmen isn't well, either, and there's no doctor

nearer than Laredo. He says she's got to be operated on sooner or later—she has sudden, very painful attacks, and there's no telling when one of them will be—serious. It's hell to have to wait for cotton to grow before you can take your sister to San Antone, and to have to keep her out in the sticks meanwhile." Galvez turned toward the flyer and went on apologetically: "Excuse me for being so damn personal, but it gets on my nerves and it's been a long while since I've had a white man to talk to."

The hard-faced, dark Galvez was patently eager to be friendly. And gradually Sleepy forgot the rather unpleasant impression made on him at the start by the man's thin-lipped, lowering countenance.

"I'm interested, sir. It's a tough break, but let's hope the crop will be a good one."

SLEEPY'S words were specious, for the appearance of the bedraggled fields did not augur well for the crop. He wondered briefly at the frankness of the brooding Spaniard, as he studied the man. He was dressed in flannel shirt and overalls, but his hands showed no signs of manual labor. He seemed to be about thirty-five years old.

In the course of their desultory chat Sleepy learned that the elder Galvez had been wealthy, but that he had been a loyal Huerta man in Mexico, and had been executed, and his property confiscated in the revolution, leaving his two children practically penniless.

Soon the vivacious Carmen appeared, and under her questioning Sleepy was induced to spin a few yarns of the border patrol. Her candid admiration and interest were very pleasant, and Spears lounged back in his chair, smoked his cigar, and enjoyed himself to the limit. When at length he got up to go, Galvez held out his hand.

"If you think you could stand it, we'd be delighted to have you come down for a week-end," he said. "How about next Saturday? It would be a treat——"

"You will come, will you not, señor?" Carmen seconded her brother. She put one beseeching hand on the flyer's arm, and her soft, velvety eyes were upturned to his.

"I sure will, if I can swap patrols with some one," he said. "I guess I can make it."

"Ah'd admire t' come," put in Molasses, who had joined them a moment before and was now standing at attention.

Carmen's flashlike smile was instantly subdued. In the opaque little eyes of her brother there appeared a momentary twinkle, as he said gravely:

"Well, we'll expect you both. There isn't anything to do, but it will be an act of charity."

"Philanthropy must be a pleasant profession, then," opined Spears. "Barring an act of God, we'll be here."

"She works fast," he thought to himself as the De Haviland bore them eastward, and was immediately conscious that the implication in his thought was entirely foreign to his real idea of her. "A convent, and then buried down there—she's just as natural as a child and doesn't know how dangerous she is."

THE week-end was pleasant, as were the three that followed in quick succession. Carmen was always willing to fall in with his mood and there were long, lazy afternoons spent talking under the fringe of trees along the Rio Grande, occasional rides, and more dangerous hours under the thick purple canopy of the night.

The girl was a creature of curious contrasts—and persistent charm. She took no pains to hide her delight at being with him, and her frank admiration held no taint of coquetry. Occasional flashes of sophistication but added to her fascination. There was one night when she appeared for dinner in Spanish costume, complete from red slippers to mantilla. Her hair was piled high on her head, surmounted by a huge comb. That night she had been all woman — elusive, mysterious, tormenting. Finally, at her brother's suggestion, she danced to the strumming of his guitar. When she had whirled toward her chair and dropped into it, breathless, she changed suddenly into a girl again. It was curiously theatrical and subtly disturbing to the lounging Spears.

Galvez left them much to themselves, and seemed more and more to be giving himself up to fits of brooding melancholy. Sleepy sympathized, yet hesitated to voice his feeling.

On the fourth Saturday Mulberry, at his own request, accompanied Spears to the Galvez ranch. The previous week-ends had been busy ones for Molasses, for he was now an engaged man. "The flyin' done the trick," he told Spears. The wedding was to take place in a month, and this particular week-end the corpulent Mrs. Munson was in Brownsville on business connected with a trousseau.

They found Carmen lying in a chair on the veranda, languid and weak, recovering from one of the attacks which her brother so dreaded. Mulberry, after paying his respects, immediately went in search of the Mexicans and a game of cards.

Gradually, under the influence of Sleepy's facetious conversation, the girl regained her wonted gaiety, although she did not feel able to come to the table for dinner. Galvez made no effort to hide his depression, and Sleepy was glad when the meal was over. As they rose from the table Galvez went into the kitchen, with a murmured apology, and Sleepy strolled toward the veranda, stopping just inside the door as he heard Carmen's low-pitched voice. The flyer was transfixed with amazement at the passion and venom in it. She was talking to the old servant, in Spanish. He could neither see her nor understand what she was saying, but as he listened he got the impression of a spitting cat. When the old woman passed him in the hall he saw that her deep-set eyes were flashing viciously.

"MY, what a wild cat we have with us," he drawled, as he emerged from the house. The quick Texas twilight had fallen, and he could not see the girl's face.

"You hear-rd? I am so sorry, Señor Sleepy, but I—I am nervous, and I have a terrible tempair. Will you excuse me—yes?"

She was a wistful girl again.

"Why should you ask my pardon, little lady? If it relieves your mind to break forth, why go ahead! I'm just glad you picked some one besides me for the receiving end. Outside of that, I don't care."

"Is there anything you care about, Señor Sleepy?" Carmen asked suddenly.

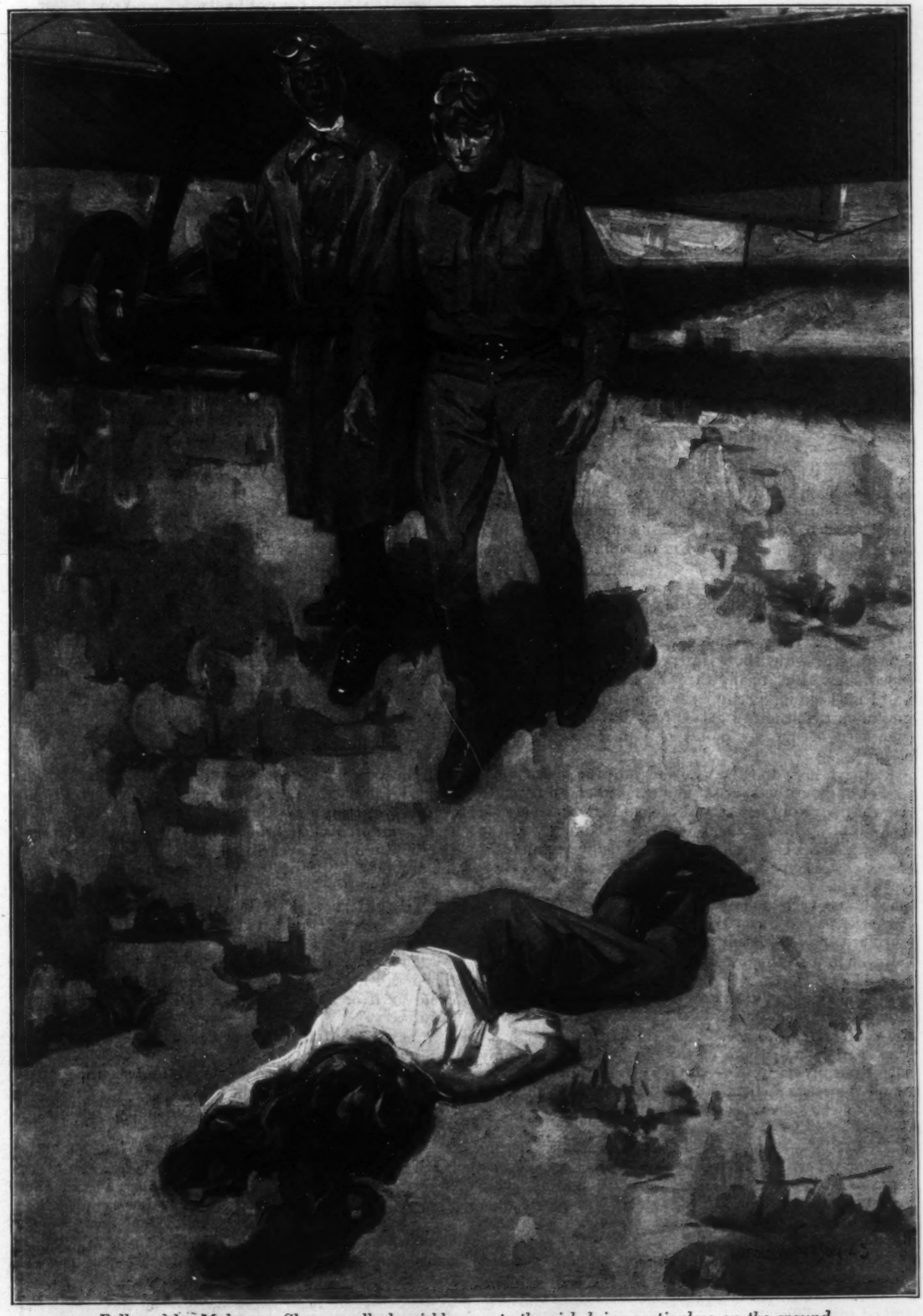
He leaned against a veranda post directly in front of her, his body falling automatically into lines of complete repose as he looked down at her. Her uplifted eyes glowed in the vague beauty that was her face.

"Why, yes—I care about you," he said, the hint of a laugh in his voice. "I also like steak with onions——"

She caught her breath quickly. It sounded suspiciously like a half sob. He bent over her and with one hand under her chin he compelled her to meet his steady gaze.

"Aren't you used to my gutter humor by now?" he demanded. "You know I think a lot of my tempestuous playmate!"

There was an unusual ring in the slow words, despite himself, and in quick answer two soft arms encircled his neck and drew his face toward hers. He resisted mo-



Followed by Molasses, Sleepy walked quickly over to the girl, lying motionless on the ground

mentarily, and she laughed—a low, intoxicating murmur of mirth.

"You ar-re afraid I will say: 'Now that we are engaged——' "

Suddenly he kissed her, and again she laughed and held him prisoner.

"You ar-re so afraid, Sleepy, but do not be. Is there any reason why we should not kiss each other? It is so nice!"

"I'll say it is!" cried Sleepy sincerely.

HE dropped to his knees beside her and strove to regain control of himself. Although no amateur, he was floundering in unaccustomed depths. In some subtle way her sudden sophistication made her more than ever desirable.

"I like you so much, Señor Sleepy——"

With an effort he regained a measure of his wonted nonchalance.

"But——" he began.

"No buts, Sleepy!" Soft lips cut off his words.

Suddenly she laughed, her face like an elf's.

"You were so funny, Sleepy! So afraid the little country girl would br-reak her heart if she did not win you——"

"Cease, woman!" grinned the flyer. "I could sit here and hold hands with you forever, but honestly I'd be a bust as a married man! I was complimenting you—you see, I admitted you could twist me around your little finger, and it's not because I'm on a moonlight drunk, either!"

Again she kissed him.

"I like you more all the time, Sleepy—and I feel so much better!"

For hours they sat there—hours that sped swiftly, interspersed with short intervals when words were superfluous. But, finally the girl rose from her chair.

"I must go in, Sleepy," she said softly. "I must be careful of myself until I get better. But you will not be frightened of me any more—no? Good night, Señor Sleepy."

A quick kiss, and she vanished into the house.

For an hour the flyer sat and smoked and listened to the whispering of the mesquite along the river bank. He was not at all in the mood for sleep—his mind was too full of thoughts of the girl for that. Finally he threw his empty cigarette packet into the darkness and rose.

"It's pleasant—but I guess it's got to stop," he soliloquized, and went quietly upstairs.

As he passed down the hall on tiptoe he heard the murmur of voices emanating from Carmen's room, her voice plainly distinguishable from her brother's heavy tones.

"Poor kid—can't sleep from the pain, probably," he thought. He would have liked to offer a loan to Galvez, and yet it might give offense. He'd better try, though, for it worried him to think of the girl buried here, many miles from any doctor——Having decided finally that he would approach Galvez about it in the morning, he drifted off into dreamless slumber.

CARMEN was not at the breakfast table when Sleepy came down next morning, and Galvez was visibly depressed. They ate in silence. And Sleepy was trying to determine how to broach the subject of the loan when the girl came slowly down the stairs, supported by the old servant.

"Good morning!" she hailed them, as she passed the dining-room door on her way to the porch. Her face showed no indications of weakness or strain, although she walked with difficulty.

Sleepy hastily finished the last mouthful of coffee, lit a cigarette, and rose.

"There's something I want to talk over with you when you have time, Galvez," he said slowly.

Galvez pushed aside his scarcely touched food and stood up.

"Go out and talk to Carmen, will you?" he said abruptly. "I'm going to phone the doctor now, although I promised her I wouldn't. This is the first time an attack has lasted anywhere near this long, and I'm worried sick, Spears!"

He went into the hall, where the telephone was, and Sleepy proceeded to the veranda. Carmen was sipping her coffee, and she smiled at him gaily over the brim of the cup.

"Game!" thought Sleepy admiringly. "How are we this morning?" he said aloud.

"Quite well, and vairry happy!" she returned, taking no notice of the murmur of her brother's voice in the hall. Sleepy glanced toward the telephone from his post on the steps. For a moment his gaze held, and then the heavy lids drooped again and he strolled toward her.

"You're more pleasing to the eye when sick than most girls are in the pink of condition," he said, with lazy admiration.

"The—the pink——"

"I forgot that you'd been brought up in a convent," he laughed. "We'd better make a trade: you teach me Spanish and I'll teach you slang."

Her reply was interrupted by the sudden appearance of her brother. He walked to the edge of the porch and for a moment stared moodily at the De Haviland a few hundred feet away. Suddenly he turned, his dark face grim and set.

"Spears, I'm going to ask a great favor of you—because I know no other way," he said, his opaque little eyes holding the airman's steadily.

"Anything at all that I can do I will," was the quiet reply.

"Carmen, it's as I thought. Doctor Leader says that the steady continuance of that pain means—the worst. You must be taken to a hospital and the operation performed—at once. Lieutenant, will you fly her to San Antone? You can get there in two hours, I know. By train from McMullen it means twenty-four, not counting the time until ten o'clock to-night. I—I'm afraid it's life and death, Spears."

THE girl lay quietly in her chair, making no sign. She seemed stunned at the suggestion. Sleepy did not hesitate.

"Of course, it's against all rules, but in a case like this I can fix it—not that I wouldn't do it whether I could fix it or not," he added, and then called loudly: "Mulberry!"

"Yessir!" Mulberry appeared like magic in answer to Spears' shout.

"Go over and take the stakes out and the ropes off—I'm leaving in the ship right away."

Mulberry asked no questions and waited not on the order of his going.

"Lieutenant, there's nothing I can say, but you know how I feel," said Galvez, his eyes on the floor. He turned toward the door. "If you'll carry her over, I'll pack her things. You can take a couple of suit cases, can't you?"

"Sure. Wire 'em on the wings. And don't worry, Galvez. I'll fly along the railroad so there will not be much danger, and in case we come down we can flag the train to-night and no time will be lost."

He swung the girl into his arms, and went down the steps.

"We'll be all ready by the time you bring her things," he said over his shoulder, and then resumed his deliberate way toward the ship.

Ten minutes later Carmen was ensconced in the rear cockpit, her face flushed and her eyes flashing, though she leaned back weakly. Sleepy, with Colt strapped on and goggles pushed up on his forehead, drew Mulberry aside.

"We won't crank up yet," he said, and then proceeded to give a few low-voiced directions which made Mulberry's already prominent eyes pop obviously.

THEN Sleepy leaned against the tip of one wing, his eyes glowing softly, and the generous mouth slightly tightened. A few minutes later Galvez appeared, toiling across the next field with two suit cases which seemed to be a heavy burden, judging by his sagging shoulders. The airman lounged over to meet him.

"I'll give you a lift," he said as Galvez came up, and he took one of the bags. It must have weighed fifty pounds.

"You've got the heavy one—shoes and things in it," Galvez explained, as they walked toward the ship. His dark face was flushed and his small black eyes flashed.

They put down the suit cases near the ship, and Mulberry lounged around until he was standing by the rear cockpit. Sleepy stood a few feet from Galvez, keeping brother and sister under his eyes. His right hand was hooked in his belt, close to the Colt.

"I'm sorry, but it's just a formality," he remarked. "Carmen, you don't mind if I live up to regulations and take a quick squint at your suit cases, do you? All baggage from the border——"

He did not finish, for in that instant he knew that his vague suspicions were correct; knew, and yet would not admit it. Nevertheless——

"Throw up your hands, Galvez!" he ordered crisply, as the Colt appeared in his hand, cocked and ready.

Galvez obeyed wordlessly, teeth bared like an animal's, snarling. Mulberry's excited voice cracked into a falsetto as he warned: "Don't move, miss!"

Sleepy glanced over at the convulsed face of the girl.

"Just on the chance that I may be wrong, I'll explain myself," he drawled. "When I picked you up, Carmen, there weren't any hoofmarks in the field, and I hadn't seen any riderless horse from the air. I didn't think much about it then. Later I heard you and your supposed brother talking very late—that was last night. And this morning, just thinking about things—how your accent wore thin sometimes, Carmen, and how little like you your brother was, and other things—well, I had my eyes open most of the time and I noticed that when you were telephoning, Galvez, you had the receiver pressed down with your elbow. And Carmen's sickness sometimes seemed to be a trifle in the background, like last night when she showed energy to burn, talking to that old woman. So, being a border patrolman, I had to make sure that you hadn't laid out in that field waiting for some flyer to land and get acquainted with you. It's my opinion that there are about one hundred pounds of drugs in those suit cases. We'll take a look——"

"Don't bother. You're right," granted Galvez.

"It was a peach of a scheme, and I'm pretty lucky, I guess," Sleepy said gently. "Now we're going to tie you up after Molasses gets some rope, put you both in the back cockpit, fly to McMullen, and turn you over to Sheriff Bill Trowbridge. These Mexicans we'll get later."

"They don't know anything," said Galvez sullenly.

"I believe you're telling the truth, but Mulberry can phone Laredo and bring some men to find out. Search Galvez, Molasses, and then go after some rope. I know his wife hasn't any deadly artillery—outside of her eyes."

A half hour later the De Haviland, with its double burden in the rear cockpit, took off and twenty minutes thereafter landed at McMullen, where Sheriff Bill Trowbridge and two deputies were waiting. Mulberry had telephoned them. The members of the outfit who happened to be on the field made up an interested audience, as Sleepy lifted the girl out of the back cockpit.

"A last bit of friendly advice," he said, grinning down at her. "When you get out, go to New York. You're wasted on the border."

Surprisingly, she laughed—an unpleasant laugh.

"You don't think I ever saw this hick country before, do you?" she inquired. "All right, grandpa with the six shooter—take us away and be damned to you!"

This the sheriff did while Sleepy made off to report to his chief.

IT was very late that night when Sleepy heard a lagging step on the boardwalk outside his tent.

"Ah seen your light. Will the lieutenant let me come in a minute?" came the voice of Molasses Mulberry.

Sleepy, who was stretched comfortably at full length on the cot reading, laid aside his book.

"Sure. What's wrong, Molasses?"

Mulberry was the picture of woe. He stood at attention, his lugubrious face barely discernible in the shadow.

"Ah jest wanted t' tell ye—whadda ye think o' that woman?"

"Who? The Spanish beauty?"

"Nossir. Elviry! Lieutenant, Ah jest found out t'night that she's got two childern. Now you know, lieutenant, Ah can't support no family outside o' my own——"

"It *would* take a lot of stud-playing," remarked Sleepy. "What did you——"

"Ah give her the air."

Molasses stood for a moment in melancholy reflection, and then turned to go. Safely outside, he thrust his head through the flap again.

"No use o' talkin', lieutenant, us flyers don't have no luck with our women!" he said sadly.

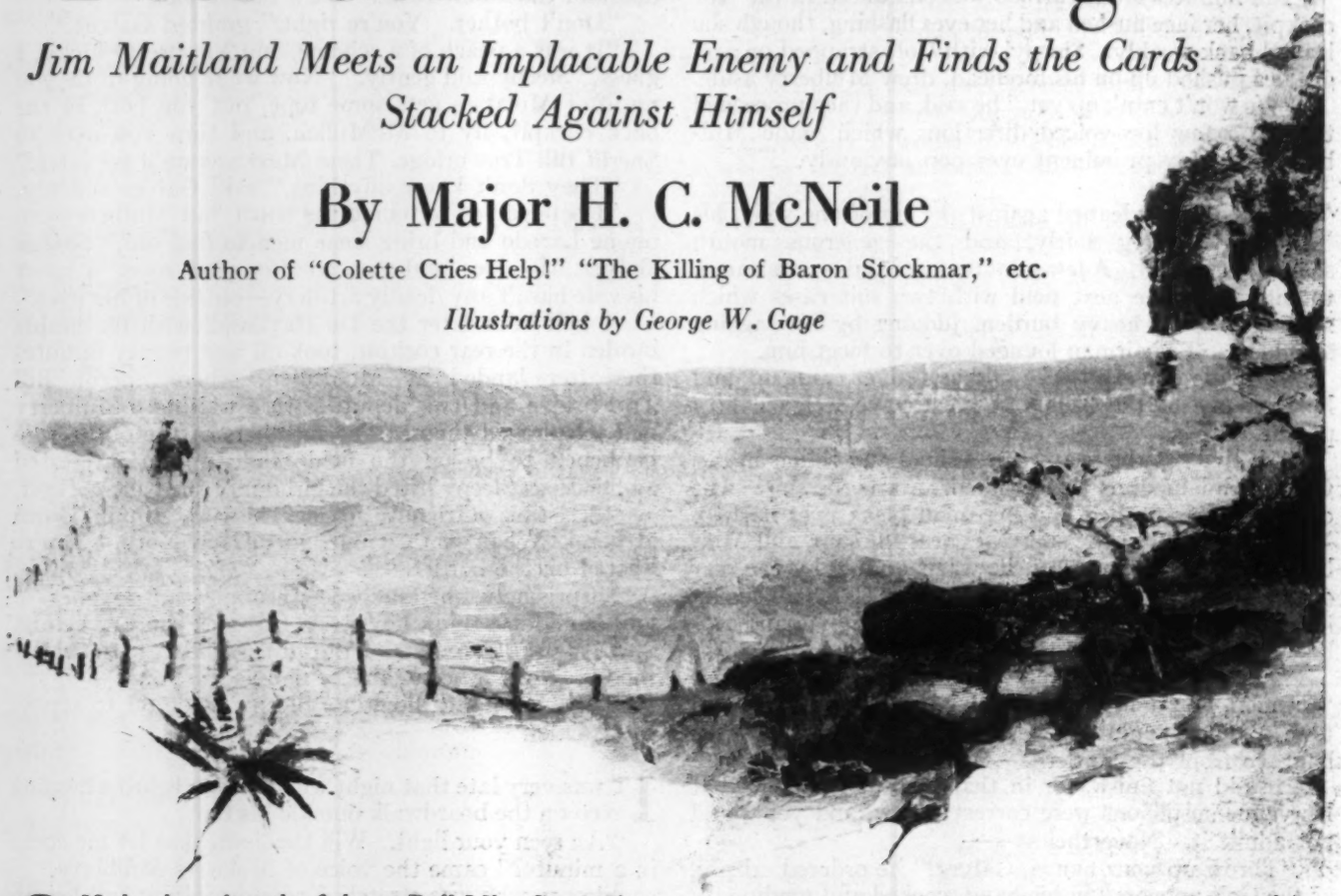
Pete Cornish's Revenge

Jim Maitland Meets an Implacable Enemy and Finds the Cards Stacked Against Himself

By Major H. C. McNeile

Author of "Colette Cries Help!" "The Killing of Baron Stockmar," etc.

Illustrations by George W. Gage



ON the day after the fight at Bull Mine Creek Jim and I were discussing the encounter as we strolled back to our shanty after a short walk.

"Mr. Pete Cornish has got what you might describe as a fairly useful punch behind him," said Jim reflectively at length.

"Once or twice last night, Jim, I thought he'd got you," I commented.

Jim nodded briefly.

"So did I. Especially in that first minute. I don't mind telling you, Dick, that if that first smack he got on my jaw had been half an inch lower, it would have been a knock-out. It was his poor condition that did the trick."

We paused at the door of our shanty, as one-eyed Mike came down the steps to meet us. Judging from the torchlight appearance of that one eye, our friend and partner had celebrated Christmas Eve in his own fashion, but a broad smile adorned his face and he was obviously bent on offering congratulations.

"A merry Christmas, boys!" he cried. And then he went into a fit of ecstatic chuckling. "To think of it: Peter Cornish knocked out with bare fists inside four minutes! Why, man—I wouldn't have believed it possible. I just wouldn't have believed it possible! I guess I'd give every penny I possess in the world to see you do it again."

"You don't seem particularly fond of him, Mike," said Jim, as he went indoors.

"Fond of him," snarled the other. "Fond of that —swine! Eight years ago he swindled me out of the best claim I ever had, and when I taxed him with it, he and two of his pals waylaid me. That's where I lost this eye," he added grimly.

"A cheerful sort of customer," said Jim, thoughtfully.

"Well, you got a little bit of your own back last night, anyway. And now that you're here, Mike, we might go into business. Dick and I are quitting: we're going back to England."

"Quitting!" There was genuine regret in One-eyed Mike's voice. "Boys, that's too bad. I guess you've got a real good claim up there."

"It's yours, Mike," said Jim. "We're handing it over to you, and the very best of luck, old man."

Speechless surprise showed in the one eye, and Mike's voice was a little husky as he answered.

"I guess I don't know what to say, sir," he remarked at length. "Sure Cornish didn't tap you on the head or anything last night?"

Jim laughed. "No, we're quite sane, Mike. But we're going back to England, to look for somebody."

"I hope you find her," said Mike, and then he strolled to the window and stood staring out at the dusty street. "I hope you find her," he repeated. "I reckon a woman—the right woman—is worth most other things put together. Though some of us don't have much luck that way." He paused and drummed on the window. "Bud Sandford's up early this morning. Moreover, pards, he's coming here, unless I'm greatly mistook in my judgment of the course he's layin'."

WE heard steps outside, and the next moment the door opened and the man in question entered. He held no official position in so far as the Government was concerned, though his power was far greater than if he had. By common consent he had been elected boss, and sheriff, and general settler of disputes, and what he said at Bull Mine Creek went. He was a man of about fifty, with shrewd gray eyes and a reputation for impartial fairness in his decisions, which was just what was

"Seems a foolish way of doing the trick," said Jim, watching the approaching rider through narrowed eyes. The mare stood placidly nibbling at some rank grass by the road while the horseman came rapidly nearer to us

wanted in such a community.

"Morning, Bud," said Jim. "Take a seat."

Bud Sandford somewhat deliberately took a chair, and lit a cigar.

"Morning, boy," he remarked cheerfully. "How's the face?"

JIM grinned. "Want's a week's rest, and then it'll grow again."

Bud gazed out of the window.

"I saw your scrap last night," he remarked, "and I lost a tenner on the result. I may say that I'd willingly have lost two. I suppose you know it was a quarter of an hour before Cornish sat up and took notice of the things that had been going on around him."

"As long as that?" said Jim. "I must have hit him harder than I thought."

"It's not to talk about that that I came around," went on Bud, "though as we're on the subject I'd like to say that it was the finest fight I've seen in thirty-five years. But it was to find out what you propose doing in the near future."

Jim looked a trifle surprised.

"Well, Bud," he said at length, "I guess there's no secret about it. My pal and I are quitting, and our claim passes to Mike."

Bud grunted thoughtfully.

"When are you quitting?"

"We might push off to-day, or we might wait till to-morrow," answered Jim. "We haven't really thought about it yet."

"I guess I'd feel happier if you could make it to-day."

"You seem almighty keen to be rid of us, Bud," said Jim. "What's the idea?"

ONCE again Bud's eyes traveled to the window.

"Just this, boy," he said. "Another twenty-four hours' rest and the effect of that blow on Pete Cornish's jaw will be wearing off, but the effect on his mind will be wearing in. Do you follow me?"

"Not frightfully clearly, Bud," remarked Jim, ominously. "I fail to see any relation between Peter Cornish's jaw and my future plans."

Bud Sandford's gray eyes twinkled as he surveyed Jim's set mouth.

"I was afraid you mightn't," he confessed. "Though it seems powerful clear to me. Now look here, son," he went on, leaning forward, and emphasizing his remarks with his finger on Jim's knee, "this is how the land lies. You beat Pete Cornish last night, in a fair, straight fight. You laid him out as stiff as a piece of frozen mutton, and everybody knows it. If you fought him again—fair, you'd do it again. And everybody knows that, too. But the next time you fight Pete Cornish you won't fight fair—because he won't let you. He'll see that you don't get a chance.

"You see, I know Pete Cornish, and his reputation. He's been a devil in the past when he's been top-dog; now that you've beaten him he'll be a fiend incarnate. He'll stop at nothing till he's got his own back. And though you're a plaguey fine fighter, boy, with your fists and with a revolver, you don't cut much ice against a man with a rifle hiding up an alleyway and shooting you in the back. And that's what Peter Cornish will

do—or something like it—unless, so to speak, you pass out of the picture while he's still holding a raw rump-steak to his jaw."

The worthy Bud leaned back in his chair exhausted, and Jim smiled.

"IT'S very good of you, Bud," he remarked quietly. "And I guess if it were possible I'd just love to take your advice. But since you've been talking I've come to the conclusion that my early religious training doesn't allow me to travel on Christmas Day."

"Early religious fiddlesticks!" Bud remarked. "What you imply, young fellah, is that you'll see me in a warmer place than this before anything would induce you to foot it from Bull Mine Creek until tomorrow."

"Or maybe the day after," murmured Jim. "We've got to do a bit of business, Bud: transferring our claim to Mike."

Bud rose, and flung his cigar through the window.

"Hell!" he remarked tersely. "And if I hadn't come around, you might have gone today. But I can promise you one thing, boy"—he paused by the door with a faint grin—"if we can get the smallest shadow of proof we'll hang him at the same time we bury you. And even if we can't, we'll hang him, I think. Pete Cornish has gone on too long."

The door closed behind him, only to open again as he popped his head round.

"You'd better think out a good epitaph," he said, genially. "Something snappy and original. The last one I made up won't apply, though it's good—mark you, good:

" 'Here lies Bill Soames, a funny sort of joker;
Who held four aces, when he didn't deal at poker.' "

FOR the rest of Christmas Day nothing happened to justify Bud's forebodings. We squared up our few belongings—we'd left most of our kit in Sydney—and we carried out the short necessary formalities for registering our claim in One-eyed Mike's name. And, having done that, the only remaining occupation was killing time. If only Sandford had not come butting in, though he had done it with the best intentions, we should have cleared off that evening in the cool. As it was—Jim being Jim, we didn't.

We saw no signs of Cornish the whole of that day. In the hotel we gathered that he was lying up somewhere paying close and earnest attention to his jaw. And in the hotel we also gathered that the general feeling of the community agreed with Bud.

"Pete Cornish ain't finished yet, pard," said one of a group standing by the bar. "Pete Cornish won't never be finished till some public benefactor kills him. And that guy whose hand you shot last night is almost as bad—Yellow Sam."

The others growled assent, and Jim drained his glass with a smile.

"No, thank you, boys," he said, to the chorus of invitation which followed. "No more. I guess I'd better keep the old head cool if Cornish is all you say."

"You weren't here last night when he came to," went on the first speaker. "I was—and I watched him. He sat up, and stared around for a moment or two as if he didn't realize what had happened. Then he remembered. Them eyes of his—well, a sort of film came over them; and then they cleared, and he looked quite slowly and carefully all round the room. Reckon he was looking for you, but you'd gone. He never spoke; he just got up and walked out into the street, swaying a bit as he moved. And he passed me, so close I could have touched him. There was a look on his face such as I've never seen before, not on any living man, and hopes I never shall again. And I tell you straight"—his voice was very quiet and serious—"if he could catch you—if he could get you into his power by some dirty trick—God help you!"

Once again there was a growl of assent.

"There are stories told about Pete Cornish which aren't good to listen to. Do you remember—in '96 I think it was—way up there in Queensland, when that coach came trotting in without a driver? And inside they found two women and three children, all murdered. The boys went out to look, and found Jake Harman, the driver, hanging side by side with his mate. There had been gold in the coach, but there was no one left to say what had happened. Only Cornish was in the neighborhood, and people said lots. But there weren't no proof.

THAT'S just one story of many. There's another one about a fellow in his gang who fell foul of him. He just disappeared, that's all—no one knew where. But months after a crazy black told a crazy story, as to how one night up by one of the smelting furnaces he'd heard some one screaming with fear. He'd crept a bit nearer, and a man with staring blue eyes had passed him in the dusk. The furnace was still alight when the black told his yarn—hadn't been let out for seven months—and there ain't much trace left after that time of anything or anybody that might have fallen in. Well—here's fortune, pard."

He lifted his glass and nodded to Jim.

"All I say to you is: Keep your gun handy as you drive over Lone Gully tomorrow. There's fifteen miles there where lots of things might happen."

With another nod and a quick handshake, he turned and strolled out of the bar and after a short while we followed him. We meant to get off early the next day, and we still had our final packing to do. And as we were walking down the street toward our shanty I happened to glance up at a house we were passing. Whether it was purely accidental, or whether indeed some strange outside force was at work, I don't know. But in that momentary glance I saw quite distinctly a pair of light blue eyes staring at us with a look of such malevolent hatred that I paused involuntarily.

THEN they disappeared, and I walked on at Jim's side. But I couldn't help wishing, as I blew out my candle that night, that civilization in the shape of a railway train had extended to Bull Mine Creek. The prospect of driving over Lone Gully failed to appeal to me.

We were away by four next morning. One-eyed Mike—not at his best at that hour—was there to see us off, divided between real, genuine regret that we were going, and joy that he was now the sole and undisputed owner of our claim. Poor devil! He little knew that it was the last time he was going to see that pitiless sun rise.

Except for Mike there wasn't a soul stirring when, without much regret, we said farewell to Bull Mine Creek. Our idea was to push on till about ten o'clock, and then to call a halt until four that afternoon. We counted on reaching the beginning of the deserted stretch of country known as Lone Gully in the morning, and getting across it in the evening. And then the next day would see us on the railway. So we calculated, as we drove steadily along the flat, dusty road.

The sun was not too powerful, and Jim's jaw had sufficiently recovered to allow him to sing. The air was like wine, and after a while, under the influence of the, at any rate, powerful concert from the seat beside me, I forgot Pete Cornish. Certainly there had been no sign of him or his pal that morning, and every mile

"Take their guns," ordered Cornish as he came up, and his companion disarmed us. "And now," he continued almost gently, but with his unwinking eyes fixed on Jim, "we will go for a little walk, and after that—who knows?"

between us and Bull Mine Creek seemed to render the likelihood of trouble less probable. If only I'd been able to get rid of the memory of those eyes as I'd seen them the previous evening, with their look of unwinking, implacable hatred——

HALF-PAST nine found us at the place where we had decided to stop for the mid-day halt, and it was none too soon. Already the sun was uncomfortably hot, and the buggy we were in would not have won a prize for springing.

"Grub first," said Jim, "and then I think a little sleep, Dick. And perhaps, in view of everything, it would be as well if we took it in turns to watch."

We scanned the country in the direction from which we had come, but there was no sign of movement. The shimmering heat haze blurred and contorted the ground, but of life there seemed no sign.

"I can't help feeling sorry we've got no rifle," remarked Jim, thoughtfully, a little later. "A revolver is all very well in its way, but it isn't much use against a man with a gun. However, I don't believe myself that we're going to have any trouble at all. They're made a bogey man of Mister Pete Cornish, and all the fellow is is just a low-down swine and bully."

And sure enough, when we harnessed up again at four o'clock, there had been no sign of him. Once about noon, while Jim was asleep, I thought I saw a little cloud of dust moving two or three miles away, but I had no field-glasses, and in the glare and haze it was quite possibly my imagination. And it very soon disappeared again.

Almost at once the track began to rise toward Lone Gully, and assuredly the place deserved its name. On each side of the road there ran a line of low, broken hills covered with huge boulders and scrub, while here and there disused sheds and the remains of old furnaces showed the positions of worked-out mines. For gold had once been found in Lone Gully, but only in deep placer deposits, requiring shaft-sinking. And the venture had not proved a success financially; the seams had proved poor and given out, and nearly five years previously the last of the mines had closed down.

But it wasn't of derelict mining ventures that either Jim or I were thinking, as the mare picked her leisurely way up the hill. And after a while he looked at me a trifle thoughtfully.

"I can't say I like it, Dick," he said. "If one deliberately set out to find a place suited for trouble, you couldn't beat this. We're simply two slowly-traveling bull's-eyes for any man with a gun lying hidden in that stuff."

HE waved the whip at the monotonous expanse of rock and bush which stretched as far as the eye could see on each side of us, and involuntarily I thought of that little cloud of dust. What if my eyes had not deceived me? What if that cloud had been a man, or perhaps two, on horseback, making a detour to get in

front of us? The idea was not a pleasant one. No man bent on lawful business would have traveled by any other track save the one we had come by. And no man bent on lawful business would have been likely to travel at all during the heat of the day.

I peered ahead, trying to see some sign of movement, but it was hopeless. An army could have hidden concealed in that country, and I soon gave it up. If my vague forebodings were correct, if that cloud of dust had indeed been a man—well, that man was in front of us by now. Somewhere in the fifteen miles we still had to go he could hide himself, so that it would be absolutely impossible to see him, until—— For the first time I told Jim about what I thought I had seen, and his face grew graver.

"While I think of it, lest you doubt my word as to the depth of the met before, I think. Just step forward a little. I don't

"I DON'T like it, Dick," he repeated, "not one little bit. And I'll never forgive myself, old man, if anything happens. We should have gone yesterday, and it was only my wretched bravado that prevented it. Though, to tell you the truth, I'd really forgotten that this place was quite so unpleasant as it is."

We had reached the top of the rise as he spoke, and he whipped up the mare. For the next ten miles the road was level, running almost straight between the two lines of low hills on each side. We could see it stretching away like a long white ribbon into the distance, flanked on each side by that interminable gray-brown scrub. At the rate we were going, it would take us an hour and a half to get through the descent to the other side and safety.

Jim's revolver lay on the seat beside him, while I held mine in my hand, but in our hearts we knew it was a perfectly useless precaution. A revolver is no good at a hundred yards, and we formed a sitting shot at two hundred to a man with a rifle.

We had been driving perhaps for a quarter of an hour when suddenly Jim stiffened in his seat, and then looked around over his shoulder.

"There's a horse galloping somewhere, Dick," he muttered.

The next instant we saw it. Away back along the dusty road we had just covered, a man was following us at a full gallop.

"Seems a foolish way of doing the trick," said Jim, watching the approaching rider through narrowed eyes. "I think we'll dismount for a while, and await this gentleman on foot."

The mare stood placidly nibbling at some short rank grass by the road, while the horseman came nearer, still at the same furious rate. And suddenly Jim, who had been holding his revolver in his hand, slipped it into his pocket with a surprised exclamation.

"The Devil!" he cried. "It's One-eyed Mike—or I'll eat my hat!"

Mike it was sure enough, and I don't know which was sweating most—he or his horse. He flung himself off his saddle as he reached us, and his breath was coming in great gasps.

"Pete Cornish and Yellow Sam left Bull Mine Creek at ten this morning," he gasped out. "Riding. Said they were going up north—started that way—— But a kid at the house they was in told me she heard 'em talking last night. And they mentioned Prospect Mine. Prospect Mine is here—we're close to it. Their going north was a blind—they're after you. Get in your trap again, Jim—and gallop. Gallop like hell—even if you kill the mare." We scrambled into the trap as he was speaking. "They'll have to make a big round to get here, and maybe you'll get through before them."

shaft——" Cornish's eyes came around to Mike, who shivered. "We have quite know why you have intruded yourself, but since you have——"

But at that moment two shots rang out. The shooters were nowhere to be seen, but they could shoot. I saw Mike's horse crumple up quite slowly and lie still, and the the next instant I pitched forward out of my seat. Our gallant little mare had taken the second bullet, and, in falling, had broken both shafts. We scrambled out of the useless buggy a little bewildered by the suddenness of it all. But it wasn't in Jim's nature to remain undecided for long.

"Run like hares!" he cried. "Don't run straight—dodge. Get into the scrub if you can."

AND had we been able to do it all might have been well. Once among those rocks and bushes the advantage of a rifle over a revolver would have disappeared. But as luck would have it, at the particular spot where we had halted there was a stretch of about seventy yards of open ground to be covered before the protection of the low foothills could be reached. And we hadn't gone ten yards before another shot rang out and Mike gave a cry of pain. He had been plugged through the shoulder and instinctively we stopped to help him.

It was then that we saw Cornish. He had risen from behind a boulder about eighty yards away, and his rifle was still up to his shoulder.

"Put up your hands, or I shall fire again."

His voice was perfectly quiet, without a trace of excitement or anger, and for a moment we hesitated. There was another sharp crack, and once again Mike groaned and staggered. This time it was the other shoulder, and it became increasingly obvious that Pete Cornish with a gun was not a man to be played with. Our hands went up, Jim's and mine—while Mike stood beside us helpless. And there we waited in a row while Cornish leisurely approached us. He had been joined by Yellow Sam, and they both were holding their rifles ready for an immediate shot.

"Take their guns," ordered Cornish as he came up, and his companion disarmed us. "And now," he continued almost gently, but with his unwinking eyes fixed on Jim, "we will go for a little walk. And then, Mr. Maitland—I believe that is your name—we will have a little talk. And after that—who knows? You will keep your hands above your heads, and Sam and I will be behind you. Will you lead the way, Mr. Maitland?"

"Where do you propose that we should go?" Jim asked indifferently.

"To that disused mine shaft you see there," answered Cornish, and we started off, Jim leading. A rough, disused track marked the way up the hill, and after a few minutes' walking we reached a rotting wooden pallisade erected in days gone by around the crushers and stamps and offices.

"Straight on, Mr. Maitland," came the quiet voice from behind us. "Through the gate, and then to the left. That's right, and now we will stop and have a little talk. Kindly stand there in a row and I will endeavor to entertain you."

His blue eyes, with a strange, almost filmy, look in them, never left Jim's face.

"Possibly you are unacquainted with deep placer mining," he began gently. "You are now standing at the top of one of the deepest shafts in the world, probably. Not the main shaft, but a ventilation. As you will see, there is no lift. But you will also note that this shaft has been used for lowering stores or something of that kind: timber, perhaps—but the point is a small one. That pulley attached to the overhead beam, which I have carefully oiled this afternoon, Mr. Maitland, is, you will perceive, immediately over the center of the shaft. Moreover, this very long coil of rope, which with some difficulty I passed over the pulley, is clearly intended to lower things to the bottom of the shaft. Considering how old it is, it seems in astonishingly good condition."

Fascinated, I stared at the rope as the whole plot became clear. Coil after coil of it lay on one side of the shaft, but one end passed over the central pulley and was loosely tied to a stake beside Cornish.

"I HOPE my intentions are clear," he continued gently. "I shall request you to take hold of this end that you see attached to this post, and then walk to the edge of the shaft. You will then step over the edge, and I shall lower you to the bottom. Shortly afterward your friend will repeat the performance, after which the rope will be thrown down to keep you company. Of course"—his voice was almost regretful—"should the rope prove unequal to the strain, or should it be too short, you will drop. And the length of the fall will decide whether you do it successfully or not. And while I think of it, lest you should doubt my words as to the depth——" His eyes came round to Mike, who shivered. "We have met before, I think. Just step forward a little. I don't quite know why you have intruded yourself, but since you have——"

It was over in a second. As calmly as if he were eating his dinner, Cornish shot Mike through the heart. Mike had been standing near the edge of the shaft, and he spun round and toppled over backward.

"You cold-blooded murderer!" howled Jim, springing forward, to stop as Cornish's revolver covered him.

"Just listen," said Cornish gently, and with a sick feeling of helpless rage we stood there waiting. And at last it came—a dreadful noise, which echoed faintly, and then died away.

"I should say nearly a quarter of a minute to reach the bottom," he said mildly. "I always believe, you know, in removing all traces of these little affairs, and he's not much loss. So now if you're ready——"

"And what if I refuse?" said Jim steadily.

"Then your hands will be lashed behind you, and your feet will be attached to the rope, and you will be lowered head first. Or, failing that—you will be shot here and now. I give you five seconds to decide."

FOR a second or two Jim hesitated. Then he stepped forward and took the rope in his hands. He knew as well as I did that Cornish would do what he said, and it seemed the only possibility. If he did reach the bottom in safety there might still be a bare chance of getting out somehow. At any rate, it was the only hope.

"Sorry, Dick, old man," he said, as he passed me.

He grinned at me, that wonderful careless grin of his, and without another word, he crossed to the edge of the shaft. And there he stared at Cornish.

"Now, you chicken-hearted coward!" he said contemptuously. "Carry on."

But Cornish showed no sign of resenting the insult.

"I am quite ready, Mr. Maitland," he remarked, picking up the rope.

An instant later Jim swung off into space. Not a vestige of hesitation—not a trace of fear, though he told me afterward that he fully expected Cornish to let go the rope and let him drop. And what was really in Cornish's mind must remain an unsolved enigma.

Certain it is, however, that he went on steadily paying out the rope—coil after coil, leaning back to take the weight with his feet braced against the shoring at the edge of the shaft—while I watched fascinated and Yellow Sam covered me with his gun.

And then suddenly came the idea. Old memories of mathematics, perhaps, problems on pulleys done in days gone by—but like a flash it came. The coils beside Cornish were getting fewer and fewer, and it had to be done at once.

"By Jove! Look there!" I shouted, and Yellow Sam turned for a second. There was an iron bar at my feet, and by the mercy of Allah I hit him in the right place. And now came the second awful risk—would Cornish let go? His blue eyes were staring at me over his shoulder, but for just that fraction of time which meant life or death he didn't realize what I was going to do. He held on to the rope, and as I sprang at him he straightened up instinctively. And with all my force I pushed him in the back.

It was enough. He was off his balance, and with a curse, still clinging to the rope, he fell into the shaft.

'Hold on, Jim!" I roared. "Hold on."

FOR I saw at once that luck had held—Cornish was a heavier man than Jim. For a perceptible time he hung there swaying, his blue eyes almost frenzied in their animal rage and the scar on his face a livid purple. Then slowly, but steadily, his weight told, and he began to sink down and down. And with every foot he fell Jim came up.

And then I think it crossed Cornish's mind to cut the rope on Jim's side, until he realized that once the counter weight was gone he must fall himself. They passed two hundred odd feet below the level of the ground, and Cornish tried to grab Jim's leg. But he kicked himself free, coming up more and more quickly as the acceleration increased. Then I heard him shouting, urgently:

"Check the rope, Dick—check it somehow!"

For a moment I couldn't understand his reason, but I scrambled out along the beam to the pulley. I used a piece of wood as a brake, and then I saw Jim's play. He was still fifty feet below me, swaying dizzily, but as the rope checked with the brake and finally stopped, he grasped the part of it on Cornish's side of the pulley with one hand. Gradually he got both ropes into that hand—shifting his legs to help the strain. And then with his free hand he got out his claspknife.

He opened it with his teeth, and Cornish from the depths below realized what was happening. He started frenziedly shooting up the shaft, heedless now of whether he died or not, provided he got Jim too. But he was swaying too much, and the end was quick. Jim cut the rope on Cornish's side *below* the place where he had both ends gripped firmly in his other hand.

And once again there came that dreadful dull noise which echoed faintly and then died away.

Half a minute later using the two ends of the rope as one Jim reached the pulley beam, and scrambled into safety. Then, for the first time in his life, he fainted.

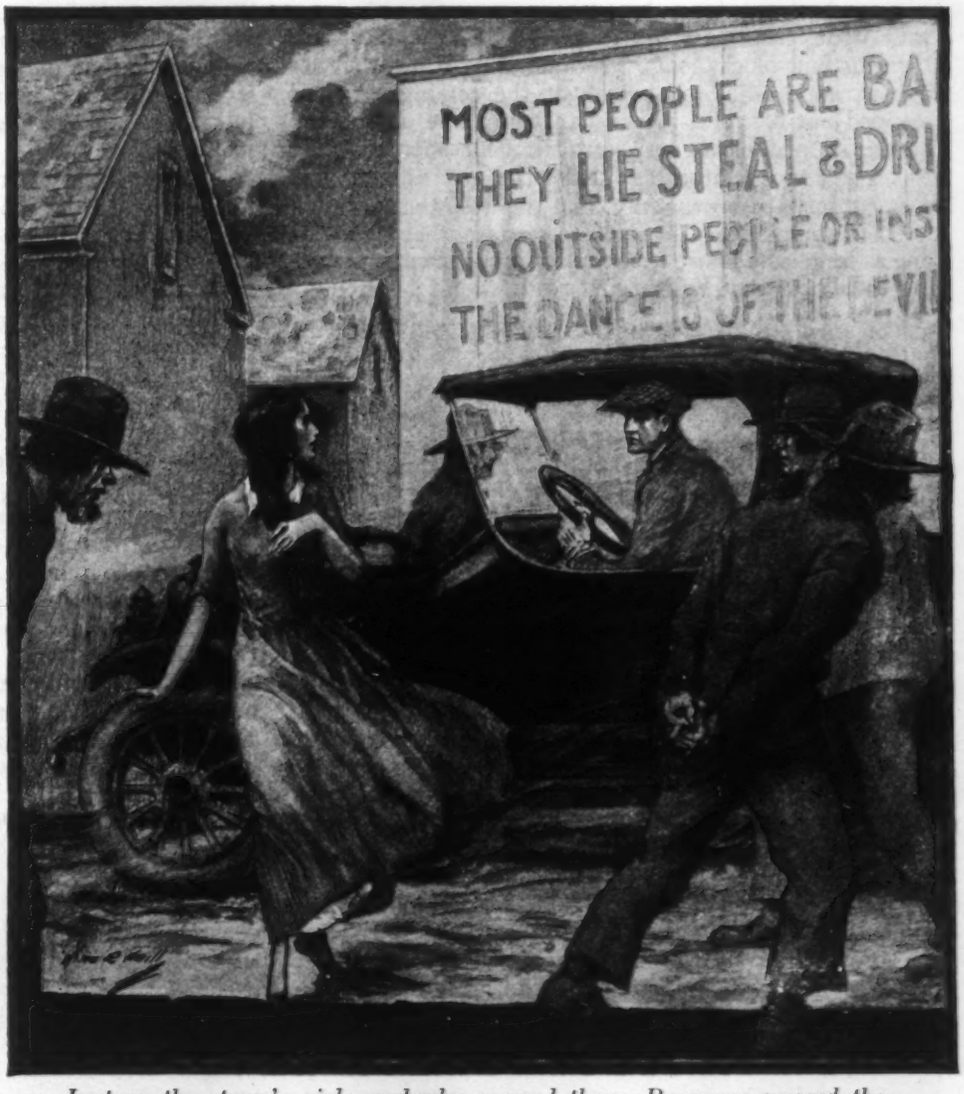
Later on we walked to the next township, with Yellow Sam in front of us carrying our bags. We gave him to the inhabitants with our love, and I believe they hanged him, though the point is not of great importance. The man who had called himself Pete Cornish was more dangerous than twenty Yellow Sams, and in his case the hangman had been saved the trouble.

Towers of Fame

In Which Eric, the Indifferent, Finds Love in the Hostile City of Hate

By Elizabeth Irons Folsom

Illustrations by John R. Neill



Just as the storm's violence broke around them, Romance crossed the street in front of his car

HE raised his voice to bar interruption.

"You cannot tell anything about any one. Romance survives where you least expect it. Would you look for it in Eric Hall, for instance? Would you suspect him of Romance?"

"Well, hardly," said one of the listeners. "Not that calculating, cold man—all indifference. Just to make your point, don't try to prove that *he* has known sentiment."

"More than most men," replied Kent. "I have a notion to tell you about him. I *will* tell you. Come closer, Janet—all of you, to hear the unbelievable."

"About Judge Eric Hall who knows only power—fame!" They laughed.

"Yes, about him."

"How do *you* happen to know?"

"He told me."

"Did he expect you to tell?"

"Heaven knows what a man expects when he babbles."

Dinner was over; coffee was being served in the big, candlelit drawing-room. The guests had made little intimate groups; some one at the piano at the far end of the room touched half strains between talk and laughter. The group in the deep window drew closer to Kent, as per invitation, and made themselves comfortable.

" 'Babbles' is what I said," went on the speaker, rolling a cigarette with deliberation, "but that is the wrong word. We were old friends: in fact, I was responsible for the whole thing, for I had talked about the queer town in one of the middle Western states. Eric is the kind who always wants to know, so when he happened to be in that part of the State, he hired a car and drove out to see for himself."

"I've heard of that town," declared Janet eagerly. "There is no other like it, is there?"

Kent passed over the question.

"I'll tell it exactly as he told me. I'm sure I can. I could not forget it. He had driven ten miles through dust and wind with a thunderstorm rolling up ahead of him—purple storm with green fringe on it—the kind they have out there. He was whacking along when he caught sight of a sign by the roadside. He stopped and backed his car to read it. It said—I remember it exactly—it said:

> SMOKING, DRINKING, PROFANITY, FORBIDDEN AS YOU PASS THROUGH THIS TOWN.
>
> YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO POLLUTE THE AIR.
>
> MOST PEOPLE ARE BAD. MOST PEOPLE LIE, STEAL, AND DRINK.

"OH! Truly!" gasped Janet.

"It was what Eric was looking for—the entrance to the town of fanatics. There was a blank-looking group of houses marked at intervals by tall, white-board signs—black letters on a white ground. He drove slowly. It was Sunday and the stillness was absolute. There was a building that might be a hotel—on the veranda were vacant chairs tilted against the rail; a few shops,

gray with closed doors; houses gray, too, all with doors shut tight, curtains made to screen. The main street, three or four blocks long, was deserted. At a far corner a man appeared, took a look at the coming car, and stepped out of sight. A woman who came out on her porch, slipped back, and shut the door sharply. She was gray, too—clothes and hair; the distant man had seemed gray—a brown-gray, like the dust that whirled.

"He stopped the car again to read another sign, this one as large as a house front, full of preachments, repeating the words that he had first read:

MOST PEOPLE ARE BAD. THEY LIE, STEAL, AND DRINK.

NO OUTSIDE PEOPLE OR INSTITUTIONS WANTED HERE.

THE DANCE IS OF THE DEVIL, THE THEATRES ARE DEVIL-BEGOTTEN.

"And again:

MOST PEOPLE ARE BAD. THEY LIE, STEAL, AND DRINK.

"AS he stood reading, he was conscious that men had appeared in the streets ahead and behind him. They fitted the houses—brown-gray, closed, shut tight. They walked slowly, eyes on the ground, but, as they passed him, he had a look from each. The looks were alike: ominous—hate snapped out at him from under briefly raised lids. Each face had a set mouth, with slashes down from its corners. Each head that turned slightly had—menace—hostile promises.

"The storm was breaking: a flash of lightning swept down the street; thunder crashed; for a moment the wind ceased—it hung aloof and the calm was thick with the brown-gray of the town—with deep silence. A desert plain, a skiff alone on the ocean, would have been more friendly, he said."

"Where is the Romance?" some one asked, as Kent stopped.

"It's at hand. It crossed the street in front of his car just as the wind came tearing like a railroad train. He saw her face for an instant before it caught her. Well, folks—I can't tell you how Eric spoke of her face. He forgot that he had ever seen a court room or a law office; or had known indifference or ambition. He said to me—I can see him as he rapped the table and forgot he was speaking—'The face of that girl, Kent!' And—can you believe it of Eric?—he went on: 'Do you remember Raphael's peasant girl? The one with parted lips and queer, asking eyes? She was exactly like her. The wind took her sunbonnet away. She had two long braids of hair. She stopped and stared at me, her long, brown-gray skirt twisting about her little flat shoes. Then she ran on, clutching her braids, and a near door slammed after her.'

"THE wind was on then; the few trees bent before it. The rain was close. There was no protection and, acting on impulse, he drove the car back of the huge sign. It was a shield from the wind and a slight protection against the slanting rain.

"Eric said it had been years since he had seen a Western storm, where it lets loose and whoops 'er up. He was half blinded with the lightning; he could hear the smash of small buildings; the rattling scurry of débris blown by the wind. His own shelter shivered, creaked. It was braced strongly from the back, but he thought it more than likely that it would go. Across the street he heard one go down with a splitting thud.

"But as he waited, he was conscious, he said, only of the girl who was somewhere in that strange town. I'd like to have had you—you people who think you know Eric—watch him as he told me this. There was not a drop of blood in his body, to judge from the color of his face; his fingers twitched. He talked because he had to talk to some one, I guess. He was not self-sufficient just then."

"Hm-m," said some one. "I don't get him in that rôle and still I do, too, in a way: the force in him could be applied as well to an—er—infatuation as to anything else. I suppose it *was* an infatuation, eh, Kent? They are strange things, but they wear off."

"Go on," said Janet.

"He said that he sat there in the car while the wind bent his board protection and the rain came in sheets. He was wet through from the spray where it struck the outer edge of the car. He sat and watched pictures of that girl's face: they came through the rain; came into the lightning; came everywhere. He was half conscious, he said, absorbed in the new thing.

"Out of that state of mind—he told a lot about that; it seemed to puzzle him as it does us now—he was startled by a new gale of wind, a close splitting of boards, the shriek of wood parting from wood at his elbow; and then the whole great shield tottered, swayed, resisted, swayed again, and came down over him. He ducked his head. A moment later he discovered that, in falling, the sign had gone into some trees standing close and was held there, in half-tent fashion, so that it protected him from the rain. Then he saw, too, some one clinging to the slanting edge of the shield. He leaped from the car and caught her as she fell.

"Her clothes were dripping with water; there was a trickle of blood down one cheek. But she was not unconscious and she struggled in his arms. He made her sit down on the running board of the car. Then he asked if she was hurt and she shook her head. He asked her how she happened to be there back of the sign and she shook her head again. He sat down beside her and watched her. He spoke to me about 'filling his eyes with her for the rest of his life'—and other things that Eric would not have said normally—or if he had not been—er—infatuated. That was the word, wasn't it?

"THEY sat there a long time without speaking, and she kept her eyes closed. The wind died away, but the rain persisted—a steady downpour; the green-gray of the storm daylight changed into the black-gray of steady rain. He waited.

"When she opened her eyes, he asked again how she happened to be there. After much urging she answered him.

" 'They turned me out of the house,' she said.

" 'Turned you out!' he repeated, incredulously. 'In this storm! From your home! Why? What had you done?'

" 'I had stopped and looked at you,' she answered simply.

" 'What?' Eric put force into the word when he spoke it.

" 'I had looked at you. Stopped and looked. It was a sin. After that, I could not be allowed to live with those who were not sinners,' she explained.

" 'I never heard of such a thing!' he told her. 'Are they crazy?'

" 'The signs tell you. It is their belief. It was a sin to have looked at you—and remembered.'

"Eric's blood was racing; she had remembered! Looked at him, and remembered.

" 'Don't worry. Just tell me,' he urged.

"She told him. He did not tell me just what she said, but I could guess as I watched the light back in his eyes.

Her father had opened the door and put her out in the rain as a wanton. He was very strict—father. As soon as the rain was over she would go to the other end of town where she had a friend who would take her in. No, she did not believe as her father and the people of the town believed; her mother had taken her away and she had been brought up differently, but when the mother had died, he had brought her back.

" 'My mother could not bear it here,' she said. 'I am not so brave as she, or I would go.' "

"Go on," said Janet again.

"It's a good story, isn't it? Especially since we have our own opinions concerning him. No king of lovers, no Romeo, no schoolboy, could have told such a tale of first love as Eric told me. Spilled it out. Words tumbling over each other.

"In one look, in one half hour, it seemed, he had turned over all the principles upon which we live here in New York. The primal had taken him—and her, too. She was not afraid; not frightened at what she must have seen in him.

" 'And why, when he turned you out, did you come in here?' he asked finally.

"HE had never before listened for an answer as he listened for that one.

" 'I came because you were here,' she said.

"Well, people—I began to see then what he was up against in the way of intoxication. He had not touched her; it had been all very aloof, but when she told him why she had come, he said he would have been wooden if he had not gathered her close and held her tight.

"Then, through the slackening rainfall, he heard footsteps outside their shelter, heard them on the soft ground close by, saw a stooped figure straighten under their tipped roof. It was one of the all-alike, brown-gray men with jammed-shut mouth and slashes down from it; with hate-filled eyes.

"THIS man leveled his finger at Eric. 'Now ye kin have her,' he said harshly. 'Ye kin take her along o' ye. There's no door open in this town for such as her. They're shut against her forever. This is no place for her ever again. We're done. All o' us.'

"She sprang forward. 'Father!' she cried.

"He struck her with his open hand straight across the mouth.

" 'Harlot! Plaything o' strange men!' he accused, scornfully.

"Eric said that he reached for the man, but that she spread her arms between them.

" 'No!' she exclaimed. 'He believes it! He cannot help it. No, no!'

"The man did not speak again. He stooped under the slanting boards and went away.

"And now comes what Eric says was the strangest

The man leveled his finger at Eric. "Now ye kin have her," he said harshly. "Ye kin take her along o' ye! There's no door open in this town for such as her!"

part of it—the way he took it. Back of the glamour of the girl's lovely face; back of the pull of her, standing there in the slackening rain holding her wet skirts about her, her neck bare; back of the wonder of her, there rose a bank of his sane self—that self indifferent to all else. There towered a steeple of his future as he had planned it; of his ambitions; of his wealth and fame which were just beginning and for which he had worked hard. They grew—these steeples—and pushed closer. The girl watched him.

"She had not spoken to him since her father had gone away; she had stood aside while Eric got the car out upon the road; she had followed him to it and stood there clasping her bare elbows—lips parted like the Raphael girl-child, he said. She was oblivious to watchers behind drawn curtains.

"'NOW what shall you do?' he asked her. 'Does he mean it?'

"'Yes, he means it. I shall walk to the next town. There will be something for me to do there.'

"'I'm sorry——' he began, all the steeples crowding around him.

"'Don't be. I'm glad. It gives me a chance to be brave as she was.'

"She put up one hand to her mouth and pressed her lips tight with it.

"'It's odd, isn't it?' she asked.

"He says he did not need to ask what was odd. He knew. It was the sudden new thing which was his—and hers. But the steeples were nearer. And a free life was what he had planned; it alone could bring him what he wanted. But he asked:

"'Will you come with me, as he said?'

"She shook her head.

"'Oh, no. I am not your kind.'

"'But I love you,' he told her then. You should have heard him speak those three words, the day he told me the story. Another man surely—not the Eric we know. He said it twice: 'I love you.'

"'And I you,' the girl replied.

"'Then come with me,' he pleaded.

"'No. It will pass. It cannot be the real thing. It was too quick for that.'

"She smiled, and he tried to laugh and say, without too much earnestness:

"'Shall I come back some day?'"

"She shook her head again.

"'Please don't.'

"He climbed slowly into the car, legs weighted, he said. He looked back as he gathered speed on the hard road. She was walking too slowly it seemed to him—her head too low——

"But everywhere were the steeples of fame and fortune to come if he were unhampered; if he could be always indifferent. The west had red streaks—— He drove away."

"Oh, I hate the man!" cried Janet indignantly. "It's just like him! What became of her?"

"There she is now, at the end of the room," said Kent, smiling at the evident astonishment of the group around him.

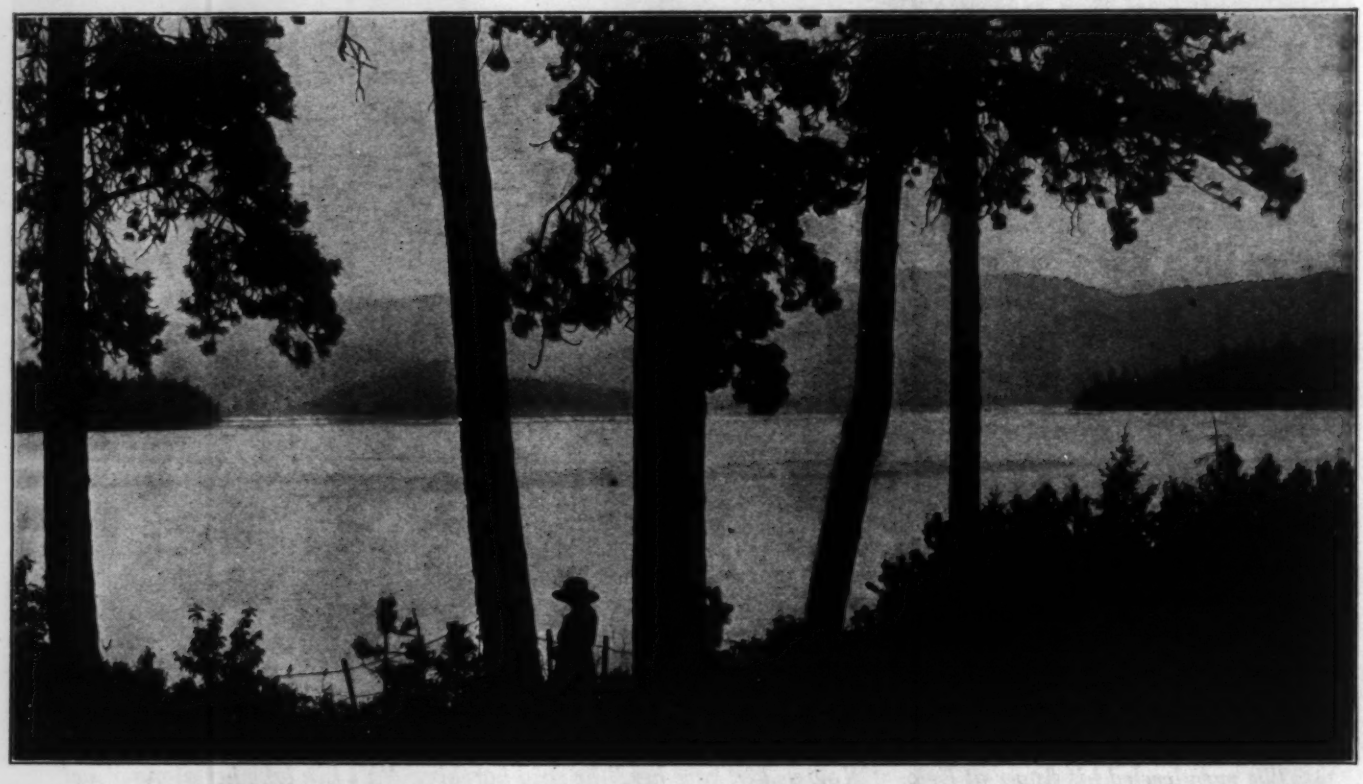
ERIC HALL'S wife was lifting her coffee cup and laughing. Her filmy sleeves fell away from perfect arms; a jewel flashed from a tiny silver band in her hair. She was clearly the loveliest, the most distinguished woman there.

They stared at her.

"But you just said that he drove away!" some one exclaimed in amazement. "That was the drama of your story!"

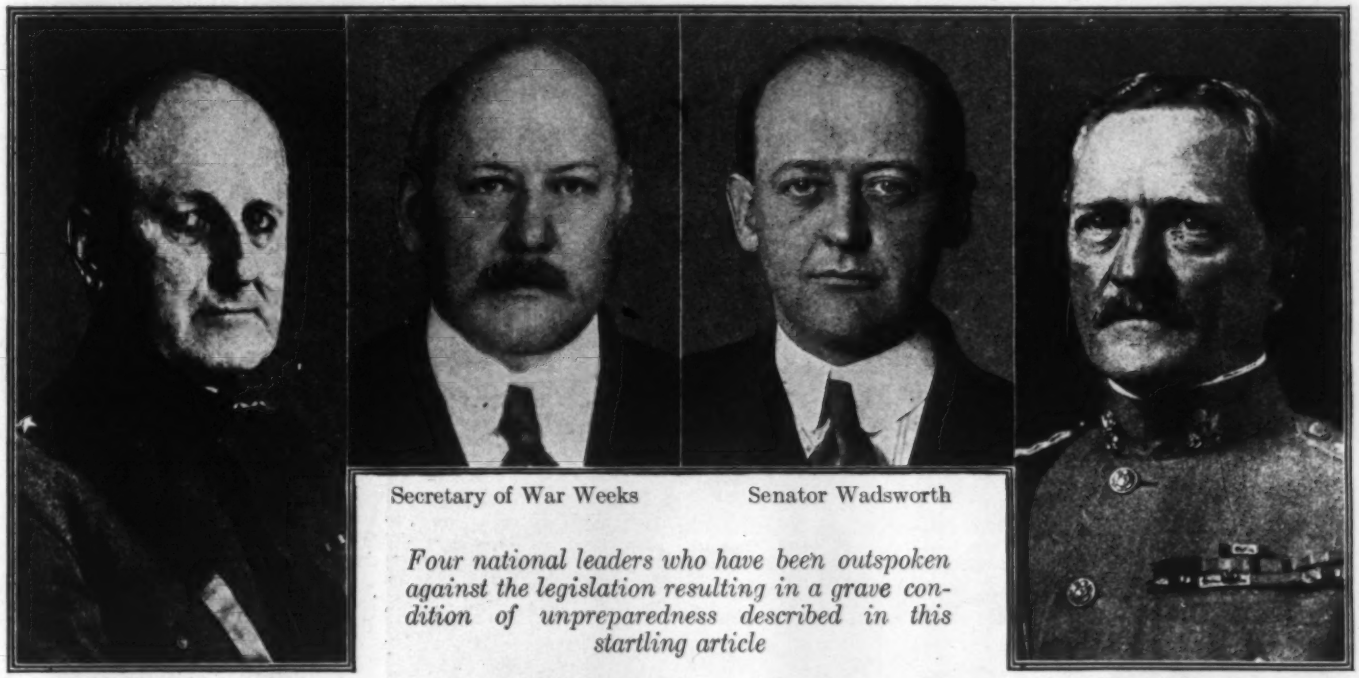
"He drove back and got her," finished Kent sententiously.

The Placid Beauty of Lake Hayden Charms the Western Tourist



The Far West has few lovelier vistas than this one of the calm waters of Lake Hayden, near Spokane, Washington

© Photos by Underwood and Underwood



Major General Harbord — Secretary of War Weeks — Senator Wadsworth — General Pershing

Four national leaders who have been outspoken against the legislation resulting in a grave condition of unpreparedness described in this startling article

America Defenseless

How We Are Wrecking Our Army While Other Powers Keep Theirs Fit

By Herbert B. Mayer

Late Lieutenant of Infantry, the Regular Army

TO tell this story of our present grave national peril, I have voluntarily given up my commission and the promise it offered me of a career in the Regular Army. Amazing as the statements I shall make in this article may appear, they have all been checked by some of the highest officers in the Army today, who, because they are in the service, must remain anonymous, but whose opinions are authoritative.

Besides information from these military experts, I have as basis for my picture of our impotent and decimated army numerous confidential reports, charts and other documents of the most unimpeachable authority. I believe the average American will be utterly astonished to learn these facts about our military forces today, so short a time after the war, when we had two million fighting men under arms.

Over one-third of the mobile combat regiments now on the rolls of the Regular Army consist of but one officer and two men each, the regiments having been placed on "inactive" status, or to all intents and purposes demobilized.

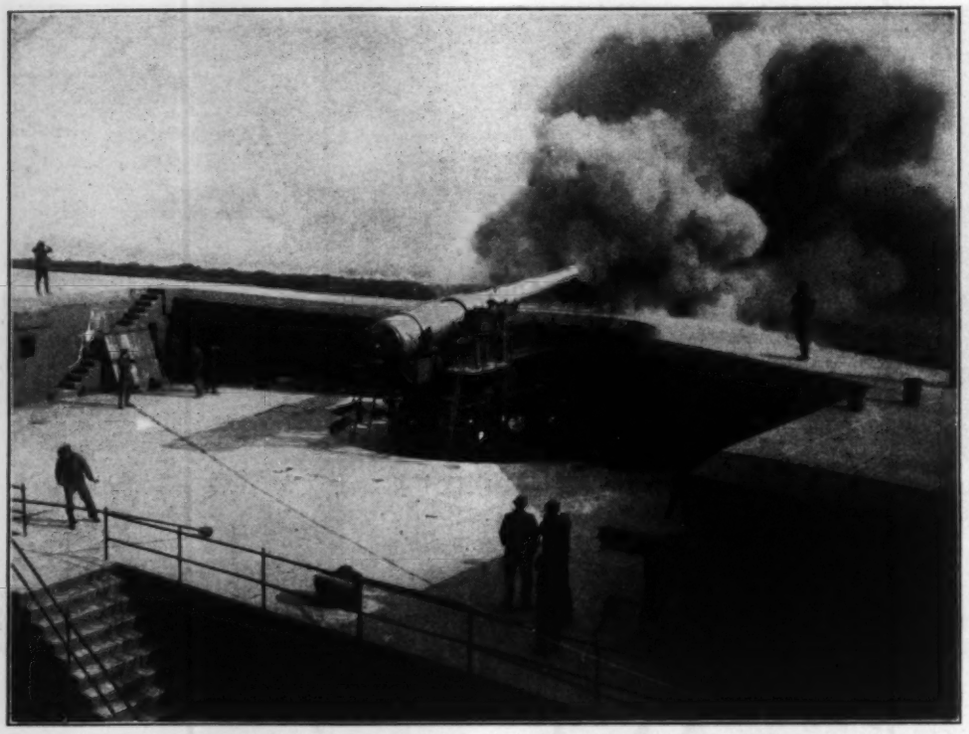
In all that Army today there is but one infantry regiment fit to engage in combat under conditions of modern warfare. Infantry is the backbone of the army, and, unless trained in combat formations, in maneuvers and in the use of its auxiliary weapons, it is useless. The Twenty-ninth Infantry—now on demonstration duty at Fort Bennings, Georgia—is the only regiment so trained, the only one in which there is sufficient personnel to permit adequate training in the use of machine guns, automatic rifles, hand and rifle grenades, trench mortars and other vital weapons with which infantry emerged from the World War.

Cavalry and field artillery are as badly off. They are under-officered, undermanned, undertrained, and under-horsed.

The Army List for 1923 carries the numerical designations of 105 regiments of infantry, cavalry and field artillery. Of these 37 are "inactive." This means that they have been demobilized save for one officer and two men each, in charge of the records of the old organizations, who actually are attached to surviving regiments in order that the Army may not present the astonishing spectacle of in-

WITH an army fixed at 125,000 men, we would be hard put to it, in an emergency, to gather together 30,000 fighting men within a month.

This is only one of many startling statements made by the author of this article, which McCLURE'S MAGAZINE publishes as a significant reflection of authoritative military opinion to-day. Readers will undoubtedly be amazed at the facts cited by Mr. Mayer to show that from our magnificent fighting force of 1918 we now have left only a wrecked fragment, unfit to take the field against any modern army.



One of our coast defense guns, the operation of which requires some fifty men, including fire control and overhead. Our coast defense garrisons have been so cut that in many forts we have only one man per gun

dependent commands—three strong. Under this arrangement we now have 37 "shadow regiments." What of the remaining 68? Are they so armed, equipped, trained and organized as to make them capable of undergoing the tremendous expansion which must come in time of war? They are not. It is safe to say that if a military emergency developed suddenly under present conditions we would have difficulty in mobilizing within a month even 30,000 men out of the army of 125,000 authorized by Congress.

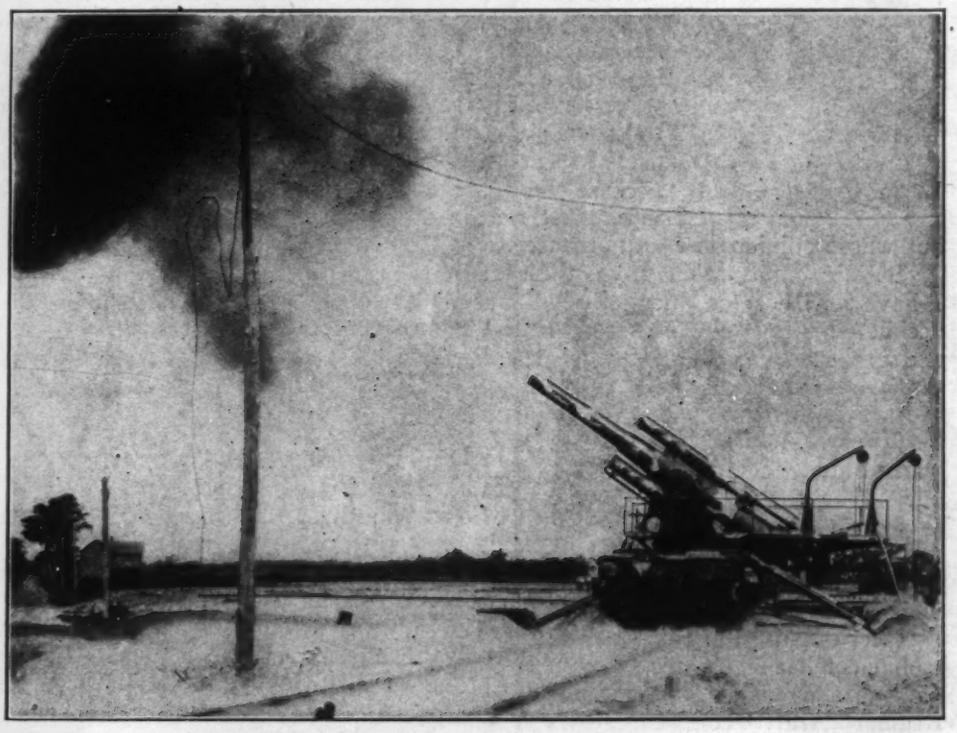
Perhaps it is only fair to say that responsibility for these grave conditions rests not so much upon Congress as a whole as upon a small, but vigorous, anti-army group in the House. The more active members of this group appear to be concentrated in the War Department Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, headed by Representative Daniel Reed Anthony, of Kansas—himself a leader and at times the sponsor of some of the measures which have brought the Army to its present state.

Under new rules of the House the power of the Anthony subcommittee is enormous. Formerly army legislation was framed by the Military Affairs Committee of the House, but under changes in the rules such matters now go to the Committee on Appropriations and in turn to its subcommittee. Other new rules, designed to facilitate the passage of legislation, actually block debate, inquiry or objection.

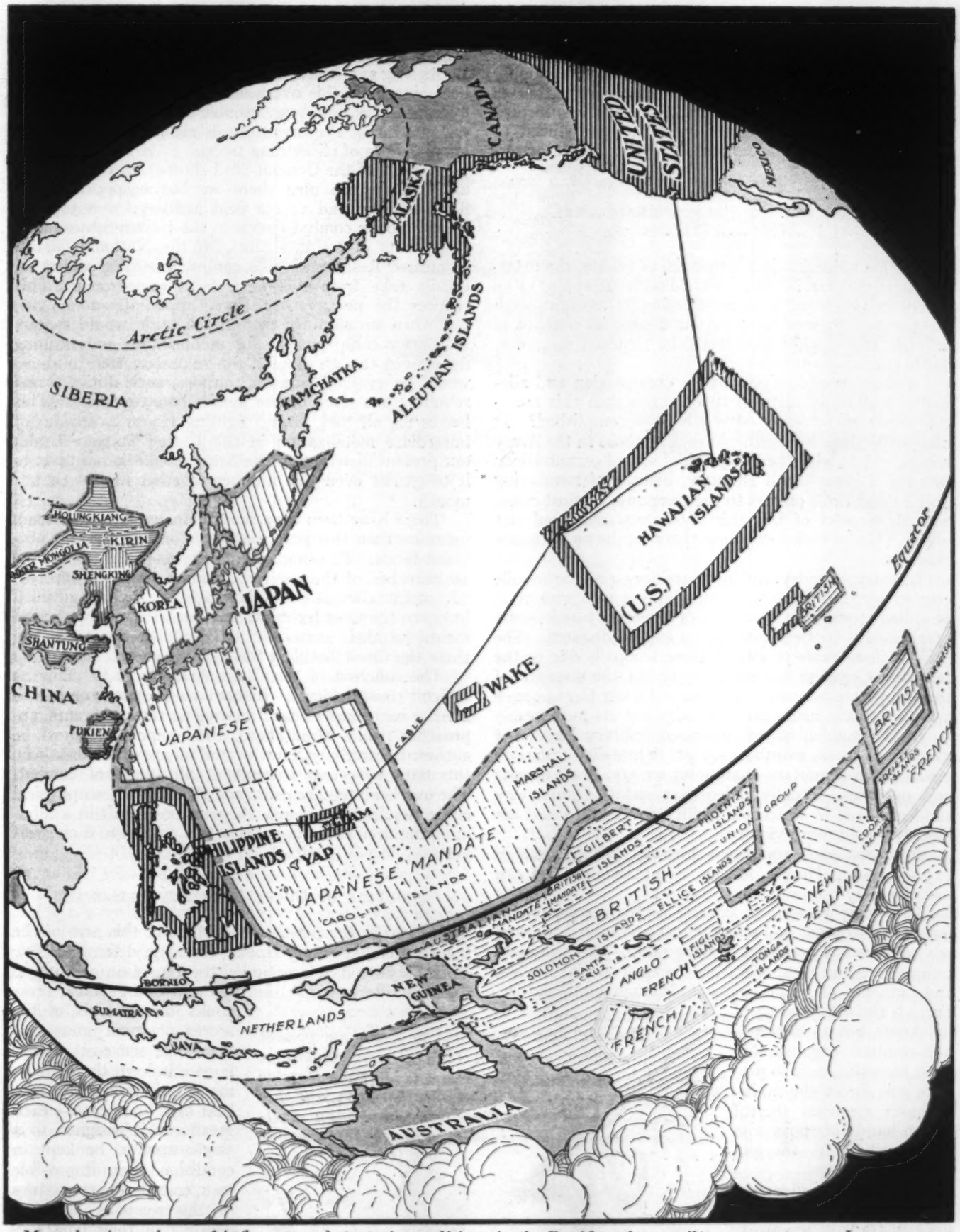
Protests against such legislation have been voiced by Secretary of War John W. Weeks, General John J. Pershing, Major General James G. Harbord, former Secretary of War Baker and Major General Peyton C. Marsh, when Chief of Staff. Their voices to all intents and purposes went unheeded, and indeed the Anthony subcommittee chose to sit for a large part of the time in secret session, from which officers of the General Staff were barred, unless sent for.

In the Senate, national defense matters reached a more favorable body, particularly with Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr., of New York—a stanch friend of reasonable preparedness—as head of the Military Affairs Committee. Yet the Senate can do little but compromise on such matters as originate in the House.

Under this system the Regular Army has been reduced from 250,000 to 150,000 and latterly to 125,000, with an accompanying loss of 1,400 experienced officers, most of them veterans of the war; this being accomplished at a time when one officer, as a rule, was doing the work of three. At the close of the World War we had several divisions of Regular Army troops. Today the Second Division, skeletonized, alone remains as a complete Division, although the First and Third, badly scattered and not functioning or maneuvering as Divisions, remain—like the greater part of the Army—on paper. It would take six months to create an army of a million men.



Railroad heavy artillery in action. Crews able to handle such guns should have months or even years of training



Map showing spheres of influence and strategic conditions in the Pacific, where, military experts say, Japan now holds the balance of power. Shaded areas on Chinese coast represent regions under Japanese penetration

To begin at the beginning, a regiment is the unit upon which the organizations of brigades, divisions, army corps and armies are based and it follows, of course, that unless the regiments are fit there can be no higher commands.

While in the cavalry and the artillery there are certain changes, due to the particular requirements of these men, all regiments, generally speaking, are formed in regimental organization much like infantry regiments, which in time of war number about 3,000 men, this strength in time of peace being reduced to 1,200, less than fifty per cent of the full number.

In the infantry a regiment has twelve line or letter companies and three special companies, the first being divided into three battalions of four companies each, and the latter in detail being the Headquarters, Supply and Service Companies. The same organization is maintained in peace, except that the companies, instead of being 250 strong, with 5 officers, are reduced to 80 men and 3 officers, according to the Tables of Organization.

Reason for the Present Inadequate Supply of Troops

SUCH a reduction in numbers is, of course, the utter-most that can be accomplished with safety, for in an emergency each regiment must treble its size and each company of 80 men must accept double its number of recruits and quickly give these the required steadiness for battle.

Without complete peace-time organization and adequate training of all men therein, how can this metamorphosis to increased strength be accomplished? It can not be done by regiments such as those in the Army today, which, with the exception of school organizations like the Twenty-ninth Infantry, instead of numbering 80 men and three officers to the company, in most cases, actually consist of but thirty to forty men and one officer. Under such conditions there can be no adequate training.

Infantry, cavalry and field artillery are the mobile combat forces of the army—the fighting men who must be called together in the event of emergency and thrust at once into battle if we are to escape disaster. The present inadequate supply of these troops is due to the fact that Congress has successively cut the strength of the Army from 250,000 to 150,000 and lately to 125,000—a force entirely inadequate to carry out its purposes.

In the opinion of well-informed military leaders, it would take us six months, at least, to mobilize 1,000,000 men. From a military standpoint we are, to all intents and purposes, actually defenseless today against any sudden attack in which our ability to mobilize and act quickly would mean victory.

How can such conditions prevail with a force of 125,000 men? How is it that from this force we can mobilize only 30,000 fighting men?

The basic reason, of course, is that, contrary to popular conception, not every officer and soldier wearing the uniform is a potential fighting man. The army is a complex organization, operating scores of special services and branches of a non-combat, although vital, nature. Force is the sole product of the Army, but an intricate, non-combat organization must be maintained to produce and direct the multitudinous elements thereof to the hands of those who will distribute it—the mobile combat forces.

These forces deliver the fire power and shock—the stock in trade of the army. Yet behind these must be the Quartermaster Corps, handling clothing, equipment, food and supplies; the Ordnance Corps, with its warehouses and arsenals, the Signal Corps, with its communications and other essential branches, such as Finance Department, Motor Transport, Staff, Chemical Warfare and other special organizations.

As long as we have any Army at all these forces must be maintained; this overhead is inescapable and consequently today, the Army, unable to cut this away without shattering the organization altogether, finds itself largely shorn of its fighting troops.

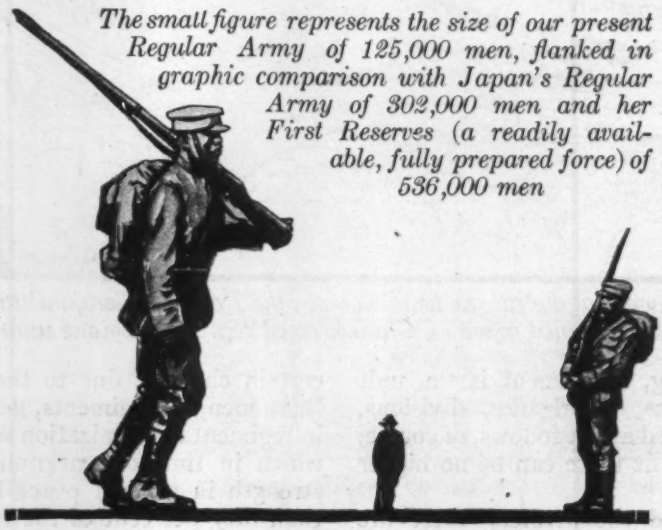
A chart of the General Staff shows that of the paper army of 125,000 men there are but 29,445 infantry; 8,565 cavalry and 11,256 field artillery, or a total of 49,266 mobile combat troops in the United States. Requirements of training units for the National Guard, Organized Reserve, civilian camps, recruiting and other details take from this force fully 10,000 men. This reduces the net available force apparently to 39,266, but when we consider that mobilization would require troops for camp guards, for mobilization and training duty, even though some of the 10,000 referred to above would be available for the purpose, such duties would require 9,000 more of the mobile combat forces. This leaves us, all told, 30,000 fighting troops available for immediate mobilization in the United States. Under our present distribution the Army would be hard put to it to gather even this number together in less than a month.

There have been no general maneuvers in the Army for more than two years because Congress has not provided funds. The shortage of personnel is so great that all branches of the service are most seriously affected. The mobile combat forces have been nearly extinguished, but even the most technical services, with expert requirements for their personnel, have not been spared. Of these the Coast Artillery has suffered most.

The function of the Coast Artillery is to man the difficult coast defenses. Before a single great gun can be fired, a vast mass of data relating to tides, currents, approaches, wind, atmosphere, and temperature must be gathered, correlated, and a staff of experts must keep this data collection throughout all stages of combat. The overhead requirements and the tremendous physical effort required to operate the weapons result in a minimum requirement of approximately 50 men to each great gun.

Shortage of Coast Artillery Personnel

SO great is the personnel shortage in this arm of the service that Sandy Hook—the main defense of New York City—today is occupied by a garrison of but 300 Coast Artillery troops. In the event of an attack, these could man but six of the scores of great guns emplaced at the cost of millions. Indeed, there are so many guns and so few men that in actual practise each great gun is assigned to a single man to be kept in condition — an impossible task, considering the nature of the weapons and the delicacy of their construction. In former days this garrison was one of the best of the Coast Artillery and made good scores at target practise. Yet last year when I was sent to this post by Major General R. L. Bullard to get some

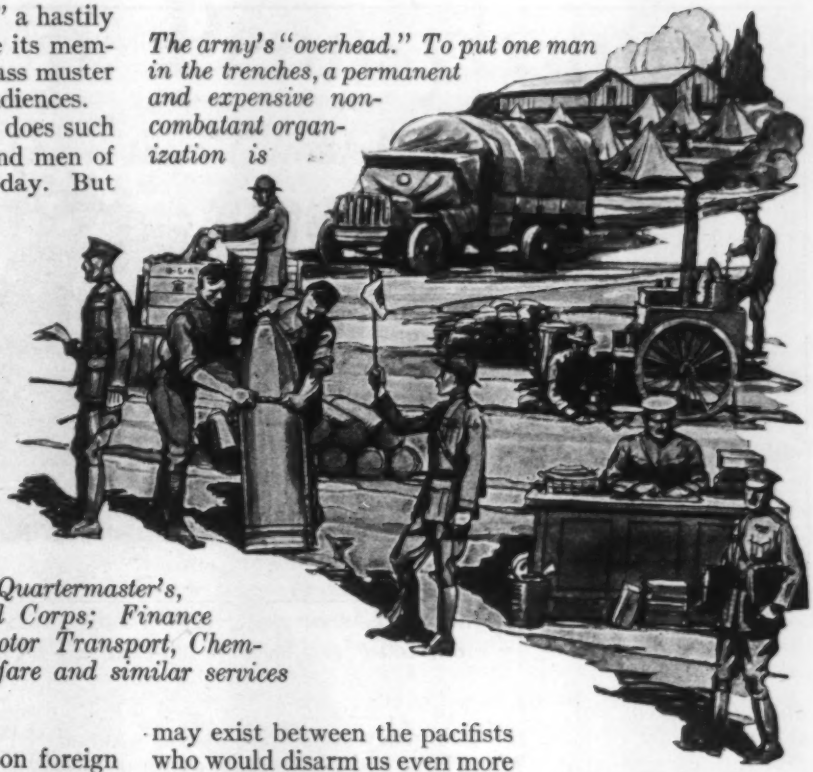


The small figure represents the size of our present Regular Army of 125,000 men, flanked in graphic comparison with Japan's Regular Army of 302,000 men and her First Reserves (a readily available, fully prepared force) of 536,000 men

moving pictures of "Coast Artillery in Action," a hastily assembled crew required two rehearsals before its members could even load the gun well enough to pass muster before uninformed, civilian moving-picture audiences.

Not through any lack of will for efficiency does such a situation exist. On the contrary, officers and men of the post were working long, hard hours every day. But Sandy Hook is a great post. Its buildings must be kept up, its grass leveled and its current operating work attended to and this inevitable overhead, eats men away from duties connected with combat and interferes with training. The conditions at Sandy Hook are typical of those in this branch of the service generally, in the posts and forts which have been erected to guard our littoral from sea attack.

The army's "overhead." To put one man in the trenches, a permanent and expensive non-combatant organization is



necessary, including Quartermaster's, Ordnance and Signal Corps; Finance Department, Staff, Motor Transport, Chemical Warfare and similar services

The condition of the forces of the Army on foreign service are worse. The garrison of the Panama Canal is several thousand below the minimum requirement thought necessary by General Pershing. The Philippine Islands are "held" by a garrison of 2,500 white troops, of which only 800 are Coast Artillerymen, capable of manning about sixteen of our great guns there—a fire power unequal to the broadside of two modern battleships. Hawaii is occupied by a force of Regulars greatly inferior in number to the thousands of former officers and soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army who have settled there, and Alaska, directly in line with recent Japanese dispositions is occupied by 248 men—a force two men shy of being a war-strength company.

The folly of permitting our Army to get into such a state is, it seems to me, apparent. The cost of maintaining the Regular Army, the National Guard and the Organized Reserve, in a high state of efficiency, would be about $350,000,000 a year. This may appear to be, and is, a large sum, but if it should be divided per capita, it would be only $3.50 for every inhabitant of the country and the total sum would be scarcely more than a third of the amount we spend annually on soda water, candy and chewing gum. The overhead, costing $250,000,000, is fixed, inescapable; the other $100,000,000 would pay for fighting troops, which we sadly lack.

If we consider the Army as a protective agency—which, indeed, it is—its efficient existence and that of its affiliated citizen organizations, constitutes the cheapest form of protection against disaster that we maintain. The average fire department, for example, costs $8 per capita; the average police force $7. Is $3.50 a year too great an annual individual premium to pay for national insurance against great military castastrophe?

Whatever differences may exist between the pacifists who would disarm us even more completely and the patriots who plead for reasonable preparedness, all must agree to the statement, that, no matter what we pay for the upkeep of an army, if that army can not deliver protection in time of need, every cent spent upon it is sheer, barren waste.

Congress recently appropriated—in round figures—$315,000,000 for the use of the War Department for the current year. Of this only $250,000 is for true military purposes. Under present conditions, however, the Army is unable to furnish the protection for which we pay. Consequently this year the citizens of this nation are going to spend $250,000,000 for an Army that cannot fight.

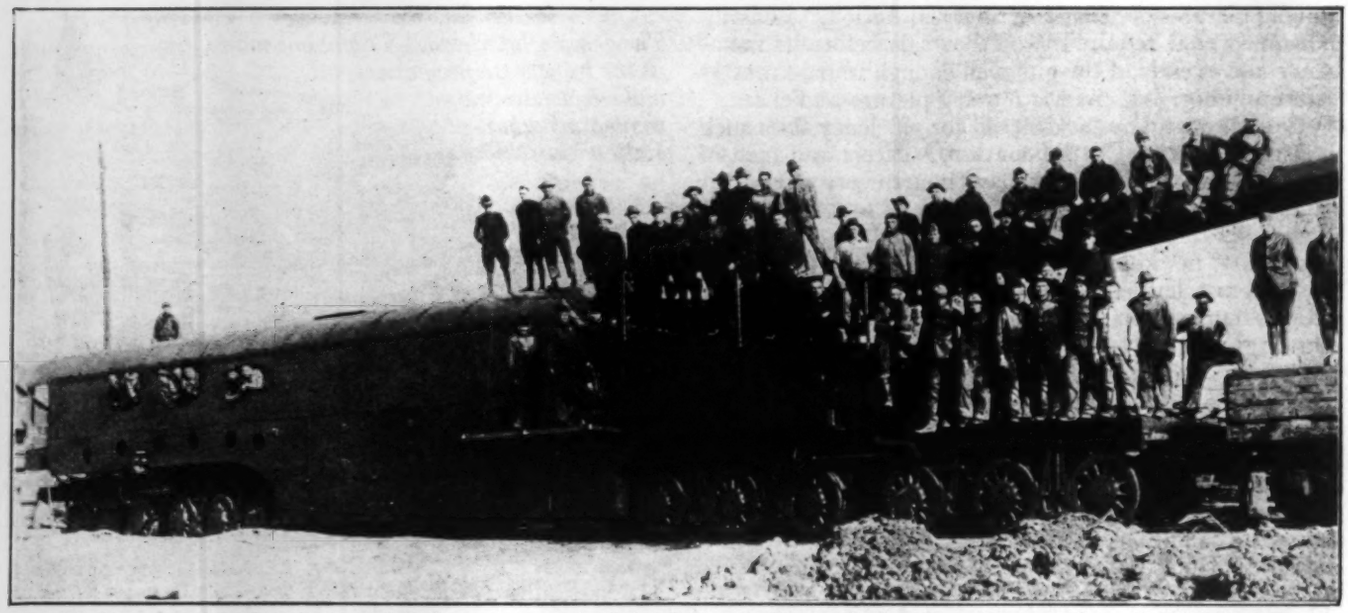
Confronted by such a situation, only two alternatives remain: either to scrap the Army altogether, abolishing it completely, or else to spend upon it the extra money which will enable it to perform its mission. And, indeed, there are indications and circumstances in the international situation which make it appear that the expenditure of that extra dollar may yet prove well worth while.

I refer particularly to Japan and to the inadequate forces in the garrisons of our possessions which lie directly in the path of Japanese political, strategical and tactical dispositions.

How our annual per capita expenditures for sodas and confections ($10), for an average fire department ($8), and for an average police department ($7), compare with the annual per capita cost of an efficient military system ($3.50), and of (smallest figure) our present army ($2.50)

It is not my intention to sound a jingo note. In all fairness we must grant Japan full acceptance of her every protestation of sincerity and desire for peace, but, granting these fully, the fact remains that Japan has carefully and adequately prepared herself for military emergencies while we have signally failed to do so.

This does not mean that Japan wants war any more than we do. It simply means that her statesmen



A monster railroad gun with the crew required for its operation. It has been proposed to supplement our coast fortifications with mobile artillery of this type

and her government, very properly, have contemplated the possibility of such an emergency and have taken precautions against it. Materially assisted by our own failure to prepare against such a possibility, Japan has skillfully progressed along the lines of her own protective preparations and so well has she accomplished these that today Japan, and not ourselves, holds the balance of power in the Pacific. *Should* world events precipitate some day a war with Japan under conditions like those of today, we would face a great and unparallelled disaster.

Military Strength of Japan Today

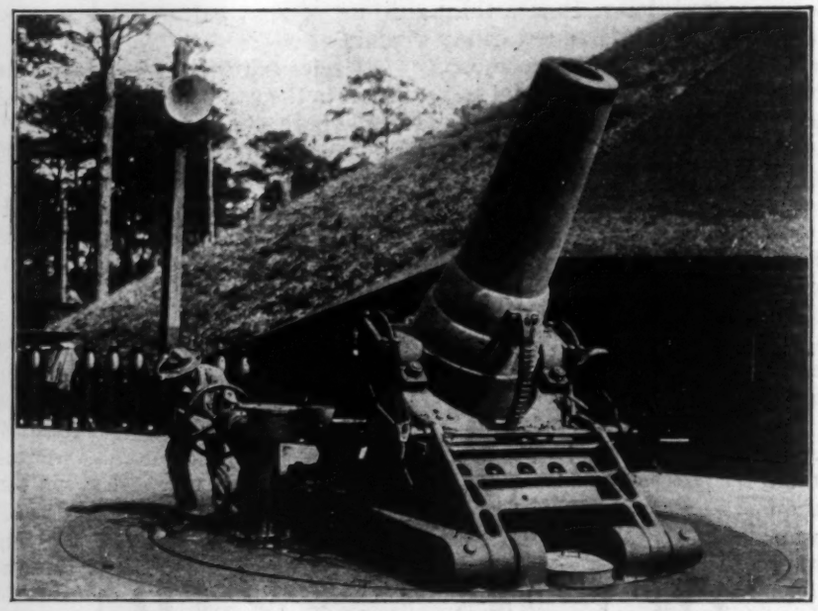
THE Philippine Islands, with their pitiful "garrison" of 2,500 white troops, would fall in 48 hours. We should promptly lose Guam, our unfortified base where only a few Marines are on guard. Indeed, save for Hawaii, in the first moments of the war we would be swept from the Pacific, and in Hawaii we would face a severe uprising on the part of the military Japanese settlers.

Ever since the World War Japan has been engaged in a succession of movements, apparently directed to securing bases from which Alaska could be attacked and the distance to our own West Coast cut in half to submarines and airplanes. She has retained sufficient naval and military forces in and about Siberia and Russian Sakhalin to insure ready use of both as bases at any time. The Aleutian Islands, the stepping-stones to Alaska, are within easy range of these in summer. Should our Navy fail, Japan undoubtedly would occupy the Alaskan mainland and islands by forces seasoned in Siberian service to Arctic winters, and wait through the winter for opportunity to descend upon our coast. And, certainly, any force Japan might bring to play would succeed in taking Alaska from the two hundred and forty-eight Regulars forming its garrison.

The total military strength available to Japan, as shown by secret and confidential reports, is 2,385,000 men, capable of mobilization and duty without loss of time.

It takes no military genius to grasp the fact that with such a force as this at her command Japan need have no difficulty in taking the Philippines from the tiny 2,500 white garrison.

One feature of the secret report which is significant is the fact that Japan has selected *North China* as a mobilization point. Under no conceivable circumstances would *we* send an army to North China; therefore, it seems logical to conclude that this point has been chosen with a view to the possibilities of a quick dispatch of expeditions to Siberia, Sakhalin, and, with bases established at these points, an immediate, overwhelming movement toward Alaska via the Aleutians?



One of our coast defense mortars with its lone caretaker

Save for our fleet, there would be no obstacle to such an expedition. And, aided by the restrictions imposed upon us by the Limitation of Armaments Treaty, Japan is working night and day to bring about a situation in which she may count upon the overcoming of our fleet, in the event of a war between the two nations.

[*To be concluded*]

Cleaning Up Pennsylvania

What the Rest of Us May Learn from Gifford Pinchot's Crusade To Save the Keystone State from Bankruptcy

By Fred B. Pitney

"PENNSYLVANIA is insolvent," said Governor Gifford Pinchot, in his office in the Executive Mansion at Harrisburg. "She owes millions of dollars that she cannot pay and the debt is growing every day. By the first of June it will amount to nearly $30,000,000."

It is a remarkable statement to make about the second state in the Union. Most people would agree that Pennsylvania needs cleaning up. But the great majority of them would have in mind that Pennsylvania is a rock-ribbed Republican state controlled by a rock-ribbed, stand-pat, Republican machine. They would mean that Pennsylvania needs cleaning up politically.

But that Pennsylvania should need cleaning up financially! Why Pennsylvania is the second state in the Union—the second in point of population, the second in point of wealth, and the first in point of natural resources. She produces, in value, twenty-five per cent of all the mineral products of the United States. She is a nation self-contained. Her population is more than 9,000,000. Her industries include agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and lumbering. She has railroads, waterways, and seaports.

Yet, according to the Standard Dictionary, insolvency is "The financial condition of one unable to pay his debts as they fall due, the pecuniary state of a person without means to satisfy his liabilities."

And Governor Pinchot said, "I have known day laborers for the State of Pennsylvania to be three months behind in their pay! It is my job to put Pennsylvania back on a paying basis," he continued, "to restore her solvency, to make her return at the earliest possible moment to the healthy plan of pay-as-you-go. I have four years in which to do it. It should be done in two years."

Gifford Pinchot is now fifty-seven years old, long, lean, angular, quick, wiry, active, and nervous. The element of repose was left out of his make-up. He has a high forehead, deeply set, wide gray eyes, a large nose, a firm chin, a heavy mustache, and a most disarming smile.

In his "Autobiography," Theodore Roosevelt said of him: "Taking into account the varied nature of the work Gifford Pinchot did, its vital importance to the nation, together with his tireless energy and activity, his fearlessness, his complete disinterestedness, his single-minded devotion to the interests of the plain people, and his extraordinary efficiency, I believe it but just to say that among the many public officials who under my administration rendered literally invaluable service to the United States, he, on the whole, stood first."

Gifford Pinchot and his son caught in a playful mood

Governor Pinchot was born to fortune and social position. He has never had to work for a living. Work has been with him a matter of choice, and he has deliberately chosen hard and intense work with small financial reward. Indeed, until he was nearly forty years old, there was practically no reward at all for his labors except the satisfaction of a good job well done.

He studied forestry both in this country and abroad and at thirty-two, after a few years of private work, became an inspector for the Department of the Interior. The next year he was in Washington as Chief Forester and head of the Forestry Bureau. And there he was when Roosevelt became President.

Up to that time Pinchot had been an unusually able man without an audience. Roosevelt gave him his audience and made him a national figure as the leader of the conservationists.

Before his close association with Roosevelt in Washington, Pinchot's career had been one of hard and devoted work, given to a faith, a great idea, and an ideal. One cannot say that he had no personal ambition, but certainly there was no hope of large rewards, and he had gone far along the path of life without showing any outward evidence of an inward fever. Apparently he was absorbed in his work and content to remain in the shadows, giving tirelessly of his energy and his devotion.

Roosevelt changed all that. Roosevelt made him a national figure. Pinchot had the equipment. Roosevelt demonstrated it, exploited it, brought Pinchot out of the shadows into the limelight, and Pinchot's native ability has kept him there ever since.

The internal evidence from his campaign speeches, his platform, his inaugural address, and his public acts and speeches since he became governor, as compared with his speeches of twenty years ago, when Roosevelt first brought him into the light, is that the Gifford Pinchot who is Governor of Pennsylvania is the same Gifford Pinchot who so ardently championed the cause of conservation when the word was almost unknown to the American vocabulary. He was a crusader then; he is a crusader now. His temperament is such that he must be in the thick of some righteous battle. To-day his crusade is to return Pennsylvania to solvency. Let us see how he proposes to accomplish this.

Pennsylvania's condition of insolvency is largely due to the generosity of her legislators and public officials—chiefly the contractors' ring which has notoriously ruled the State for many years; the carelessness and inefficiency of the same legislators and officials, and some dishonesty.

"It is a fearful situation," said Governor Pinchot, "and one that has been developing for years. The legislature meets every two years and itself fixes the duration of the sitting. The first part of the session is devoted to general legislation and passing private bills. Many special appropriation bills for special purposes are brought in and passed during this part of the session. Few stop to ask how much money there is in the treasury or where the money to pay these appropriations is to come from. Hitherto, it has been chiefly a matter of logrolling. One member wanted money for one purpose, another wanted money for something else. Each voted for the other fellow's bill. Millions were appropriated in that way.

© Underwood & Underwood

State troopers used by Gov. Pinchot to run down bootleggers

The General Appropriation Bill

"At the end of the session, the General Appropriation Bill was passed. That is the bill that carries appropriations for the running expenses of the State. The bill was passed with little regard to the appropriations already made, just as the special appropriations had been passed without regard to the General Appropriation Bill still to come. Both the special appropriations and the General Appropriation Bill were passed with little, if any, regard for the State's revenues.

"As soon as the General Appropriation Bill was passed the Legislature adjourned and the members went home, leaving the governor and the State departments to wrestle with the problem of where the money was to come from and how it was to be spent.

"The departments had a simple and easy way of solving their problems. They went on spending money as they saw fit, and when they came to the end of their appropriations they kept on just the same. It was easy for them, because they took little account of how much they had spent or how much they had left. They just spent.

"As the Legislature only meets every two years, the General Appropriation Bill covers two years. Often, the money was largely spent by the end of the first year, and for the second year the State lived on its credit. The departments depended on the next Legislature to square them up. And it always did. One of the first things a new Legislature had to do was to appropriate money to pay the State's creditors.

"It was an indefensible system. The departments spent money which they knew they did not have, but hoped they would get. The State was kept insolvent. The new administration was saddled with an enormous burden from its predecessor, and passed another huge burden on to its successor. I have inherited from the last administration a mass of unpaid appropriations to the amount of nearly $30,000,000," he added.

"And you expect to remedy this situation, to find the cure?" I asked.

He nodded. "Yes," he said, "with the help of the Legislature I am going to put the State back on a business basis and hand it over to my successor solvent and out of debt. That is all I can do. It will be up to him to keep it so."

"I understood that the Governor of Pennsylvania was one of the most powerful of modern rulers," I remarked.

The governor smiled cheerfully. "He has a great deal of power," he admitted.

Governor Pinchot has two big clubs with which to force his measures through the Legislature. Perhaps the most powerful of the two is the club of patronage. There is no Civil Service in Pennsylvania, and on that account practically every office in the State is the personal appointment of the governor, if he chooses to make it so. One way or another, he has something like 19,000 offices in his hands. That is a tremendous power of patronage.

Of course, many, in fact, most of these appointments are made directly by department heads and other officials. Ostensibly, they have the appointing power, and under former administrations they had it practically as well as ostensibly. Under Governor Pinchot the system is different. At the first Cabinet meeting of his administration a rule was adopted that all appointments must be viséd by the governor before being confirmed.

Governor Pinchot's Power

THERE has been no threat, no brandishing of the Big Stick, but the legislators have been none the less effectively notified that working agreements under this administration must be with the governor. Patronage and support of the governor's policies go hand in hand.

The second club Governor Pinchot holds over the Legislature is the power given him by the State Constitution to veto the General Appropriation Bill, item by

item. Not only can he veto it item by item, but he can reduce the different appropriations it carries item by item. He cannot increase an appropriation, but he can alter it to anything he chooses from the amount specified in the bill right down to zero—and this without consultation with the Legislature, without sending the altered bill back to the Legislature for its approval.

Thus by the remarkable provisions of the Pennsylvania Constitution, Governor Pinchot has both legislative power and executive authority. By the power of patronage he can compel the legislators to accept his policies of retrenchment and by the combination of legislative and executive power given to him in the veto he can compel them to carry out the policies they have been previously forced to adopt.

The patronage club Governor Pinchot wields behind closed doors, without public announcement or display. It brings the legislators in a steady stream to his office in the State Capitol, for conferences on men and measures. The veto club, he has announced publicly, he will use without hesitation.

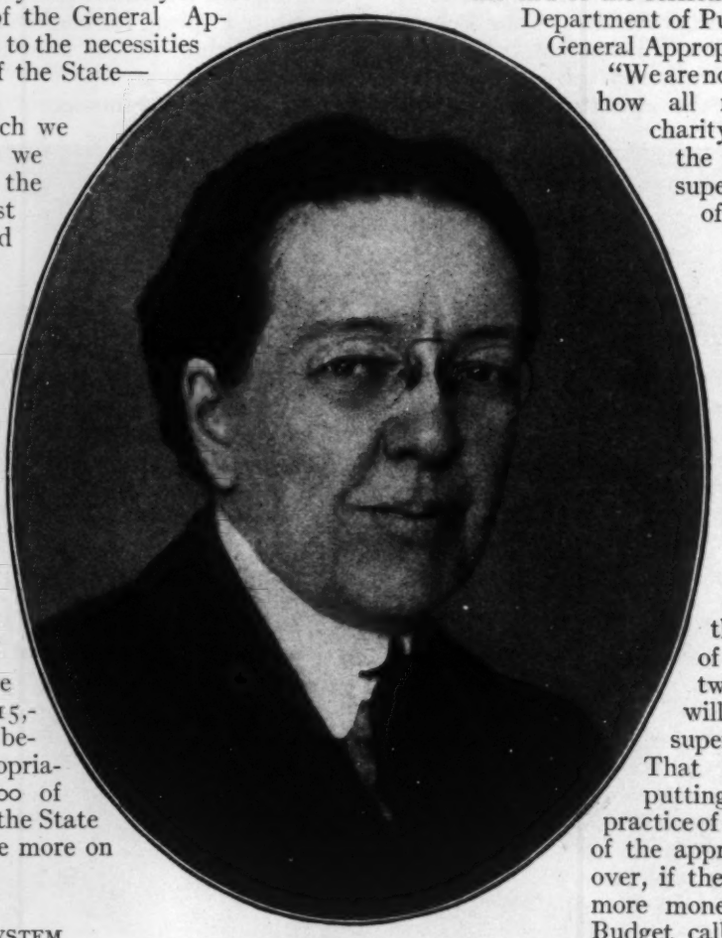
"I said in my inaugural speech," he declared, " 'I

© Times Wide World

Governor Pinchot, Mrs. Pinchot and their son Gifford, Jr., in a family group at the Executive Mansion in Harrisburg

have made no pledge or promise of any sort except in public. I enter upon the governorship completely unhampered by any private or personal engagement, understanding, or undertaking whatsoever, and wholly free to serve the Commonwealth according to the will of the people and the dictates of my own conscience.' That means that I am wholly and entirely free to veto or alter the items of the General Appropriation Bill according to the necessities of the financial position of the State—and I will do so.

"We owe millions which we cannot pay. I believe we should pay them off in the next two years. The last Legislature appropriated $118,000,000. I have promised to scale down the appropriations this year—except for education—an average of twenty-six and one-half per cent. This does not mean a flat cut of twenty-six and one-half per cent in all appropriations. Some will be more and some less. The average will be twenty-six and one-half per cent. The estimated revenues for the next two years are $112,000,000. In fact, we can certainly count on $115,000,000. The difference between the reduced appropriations and the $115,000,000 of revenue will pay the debts the State now owes and put her once more on a pay-as-you-go basis.



Doctor Ellen C. Potter, the only woman member of Governor Pinchot's Cabinet

The New Budget System

"WE have already made a start on this plan. In my campaign I promised to establish a budget system for the State. Doctor Clyde L. King, of the University of Pennsylvania, is Secretary of the Commonwealth and Budget Officer. Doctor King is an old personal friend. He is the man who reorganized the milk distribution of the State so that the farmers made money, the distributors made money, and the people got their milk cheaper. With the assistance of Doctor King and his associates of the Citizens' Committee on the Finances of Pennsylvania and the coöperation of Auditor General Lewis I have presented to the Legislature the first State Budget in the history of Pennsylvania. It provides for a total of new expenditures during the next two years of less than $90,000,000, as compared with more than $118,000,000 appropriated by the last Legislature."

Governor Pinchot used the State charities and the Department of Public Welfare to illustrate the working of the new Budget. The 1921 Legislature appropriated $22,141,569 for charitable institutions, in addition to which there was a deficiency appropriation of $2,642,939, making a total of $24,784,508. The institutions spent $25,714,677, thus providing—after allowing for incidental receipts—a deficit of $900,000 for the present Legislature to make up.

"It has been the practice in the past to bring in numerous private bills during the session, appropriating money for different public and semi-public charities," said Governor Pinchot. "That has been one of the sore spots. Appropriations have been made for new buildings and improvements for charitable institutions and no one could complain, because the money was for charity. As many as 416 private bills appropriating money for charitable objects have been passed in one session. At the end of the session the appropriation for the Department of Public Welfare goes into the General Appropriation Bill.

"We are now preparing a bill directing how all money appropriated for charity shall be used and putting the payment of it under the supervision of the Department of Public Welfare.

"Doctor Ellen C. Potter is the new Commissioner of the Department of Public Welfare. In my primary campaign I promised that I would have a woman in my Cabinet. Doctor Potter is the choice. She was formerly Director of the Bureau of Children in the department. The Budget which I have submitted to the Legislature provides $16,100,000 for the charitable institutions of the State for the next two years and the money will be spent under the general supervision of Doctor Potter." That looks very much like putting an end to the general practice of spending money regardless of the appropriations made. Moreover, if the Legislature appropriates more money for charity than the Budget calls for, Governor Pinchot will use his veto power and pare the appropriations down.

But it is not going to be plain sailing for either Doctor Potter or Governor Pinchot. Coming down on the train from Harrisburg to Philadelphia were two women who had been up hobnobbing with the legislators at the State capital. They were determined-looking women. If they had been men, one would have described them as stout, two-fisted fighters.

"Potter is in the way," said one. "She meddles too much."

"We'll have to put some dynamite under her," said the other.

The first one studied the question. "I think I know how to reach Pinchot on this business," she remarked finally. "I'm going to try it, anyway."

"We'll have to keep after her until we get her," the second declared.

Plans for Reducing Indebtedness

THAT is one kind of help Governor Pinchot is going to have in restoring the finances of Pennsylvania. Another kind is the delegation of solid citizens that comes to Harrisburg to argue a "special" case. There are almost as many "special" cases in Pennsylvania as there are charitable institutions.

So far, Governor Pinchot has been able to receive them all with cheerful equanimity and to explain pleasantly, though firmly, that there are no special cases in

Pennsylvania this year. But the real pressure will come at the end of the session, when the Legislature adjourns and leaves it to the governor to make the final decision on the General Appropriation Bill. And this item of charities is only one item in the Budget, which contains nearly one hundred, all told.

To show his good faith, Governor Pinchot has voluntarily taken a cut of $8,000 a year in his own salary for the first two years of his term. I asked him about that.

"Yes," he replied, "the Budget cuts my salary $8,000 a year for the next two years. The Legislature of 1921 increased the salary of the governor from $10,000 a year to $18,000 a year, beginning this year. I don't think $18,000 a year is any too much for the job. The governor earns every penny of it. But we have to economize and so I am continuing on the $10,000 basis for two years, until the State is solvent again. For the last two years of my term I shall take the $18,000, provided the State is able to pay it. I want to leave my successor in a position to receive the $18,000 a year which he will earn."

"You are providing a special law to control the spending of the money appropriated for charities, but how are you going to control the spending by the other State Departments? Even though you limit their appropriations, they seem to pay no attention to the amount of money allocated to them," I reminded him.

Doctor Clyde L. King, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Budget Officer

"That will be easy," he said, smiling genially. "We are going to establish a properly organized auditing system for each department and not only will the total of the State's expenses be budgeted, but each department will be budgeted. They will know exactly how much they can spend each month and they will be kept strictly within the limits of their budgets.

"Every month there will be laid on my desk a financial statement from each department. I shall refuse to approve the expenditure of a dollar in excess of the budget for the month. It will be something new for the departments," he grinned, "to know not only how much they have spent, but how much they can spend."

"Won't slashing the appropriations so heavily and keeping the departments within their appropriations mean that you will have to discharge a good many State employees?"

The Governor shook his head. "There will be no wholesale discharges," he returned. "Each department head will know the work he has to do. He will be told how much money he has to spend and he will have to get the work done within the limit of his money. That is all there is to it. One big point in my program," he continued, "is to keep the expenses of the State within its income. Another is to reorganize the State government on a business basis.

"As the situation now stands, including the seventeen State departments, there are 107 boards, commissions, councils, and bureaus—all authorized and established by the Legislature—which report directly to the governor. It is a physical impossibility to read, digest, and act upon all these reports intelligently, in addition to the great task of supervising the work of the departments and guarding the State's financial condition which the governor has to perform."

"This is an accumulation of functions that has grown up over years. There is a good deal of overlapping, isn't there?"

"No, there isn't so very much overlapping," he replied. "That is an exaggerated idea. There isn't so much overlapping in the government as there is lack of organization and inefficiency in management.

"Only a few of our councils and commissions should be abolished. Most of them were organized for good reasons and serve useful purposes. What I intend to do is to coördinate and regroup them, recast the governmental machinery into a form that will make possible a dollar's worth of service for every dollar spent and relieve the governor of the burden of supervision of innumerable separate boards, councils, and commissions which should be collected into groups, with heads who would report to and be responsible to the governor.

"For many years the organization of government has been my hobby. During the Roosevelt Administration I was a member of a commission that drew up a plan for the reorganization of the National Government. We can do the same thing for Pennsylvania that that commission did for the Federal Government, with the difference that we can put the plan for Pennsylvania into practical operation and organize the State on a business basis.

Governor Pinchot's Attitude Toward Prohibition

"THIS is too big and important a piece of work to be done hastily. It must have extended study and practical attention. It will not be possible to submit to this Legislature a plan completely worked out, but we are working on the problem and we expect to have ready for this session an outline by departments, leaving the details to be filled in by the Executive.

"The third big point in my platform—or, rather, the first—is the enforcement of the Prohibition laws. I have promised the people to use the full powers of the governorship to drive all saloons out of the State and to prevent and punish bootlegging.

"The liquor situation is a disgrace to Pennsylvania and to the nation. No serious attempt seems to have been made to enforce the law. On the contrary, the whole effect of the so-called enforcement was to make the law

ridiculous. In Pennsylvania, motor trucks plied the highways on regular schedules, transporting liquor. The first Prohibition enforcement officer sent here was notoriously opposed to Prohibition. He openly broke the law and was afterward indicted. We have on our statute books the Woner law, which is nothing more or less than licensed partnership between bootleggers and the State. Mr. Woner, himself, is now against it.

"I believe this is the only state in the Union which passed a law licensing saloons after the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted. The Woner law licenses saloons for the sale of one half of one per cent stuff, when the Volstead Law makes it legal for anybody to sell it. Under the Prohibition law, Pennsylvania still has licensed saloons. In practical effect, the Woner law licenses bootlegging, for it makes the saloon legal.

The Pennsylvania State Police

"I AM a Prohibitionist by principle. I believe in Prohibition, and this administration will be dry. The Executive Mansion will be dry and the personal practice of the governor and his family will continue to be dry, in conformity with the spirit and the letter of the Eighteenth Amendment. Moreover, I shall expect and demand from every public official appointed by me or subject to removal by me, from the highest to the lowest, entire and ungrudging obedience to the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead law. They are part of the law of the land and they must be obeyed.

"I intend to see to it that Pennsylvania does her duty and that the citizens of Pennsylvania obey the law. I shall do my utmost to drive the saloons out of Pennsylvania. The State police are already at work driving the liquor trucks off the roads."

His mention of the State police brought up the subject of widespread criticism of that body.

"There has not been so much criticism of the State police," he said, "as of the coal and iron and railroad police. The mining companies and the railroads, I find, have been in the habit of sending lists of men up to Harrisburg and asking to have them appointed as police. They have been used largely to break strikes. No discrimination has been used in their appointment and no attempt has been made to look up their records or examine them to find out if they were fit men to be appointed. The companies asked for their appointment and that was all that was necessary.

"They have done outrageous things. During the coal strike they held up the Chief of the State police and tried to keep him out of a mining town.

"I find there are 5,800 of these coal and iron and railroad policemen. In many instances they are in uniforms peculiarly like those of the State police. Not another one will be licensed without a sufficient examination as to his fitness for police duty, and I am going to start an inquiry into the fitness for police work of the men already commissioned."

The Educational Problem

"YOU have a big educational problem here, too, haven't you?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "and it is really a double or triple problem. From one angle it is part of the financial problem of the State, part of the job of getting the State back on a pay-as-you go basis. From another point of view it is a tax problem, while from still another angle it is the problem of the best educational methods for the State to adopt. Altogether, the question is very complicated.

"Four years ago Pennsylvania ranked twenty-sixth in the list of states in the amount of money spent on public schools. Due to her large foreign-born population, her standing in literacy is not by any means what it should be. Now we have adopted a scheme of expansion that means spending a good deal of money on the schools.

"The last Legislature appropriated nearly $30,000,000 for the schools of the State. The plan then adopted would call for an increase of $14,000,000 in the appropriation this year. But we haven't got the money. Our first duty is to get out of debt. I have told the Legislature that if they increase the school appropriation a dollar over the amount allotted in the Budget, they will have to find a way to raise the extra dollar. They can go ahead and appropriate as much as they please for the schools. But if they exceed the Budget allowance, they must also provide the means of raising the money.

"That is the financial side of the problem. On top of that comes the State aid question, while the third phase centers around the policy of centralization of authority. The question of appropriations is definitely settled. The others are still under discussion."

"One supposes, governor, that your plans foresee the need for increased revenue in the near future and provide means for raising it. Admitting the almost incredible inefficiency that has characterized the administration of affairs in Pennsylvania and the wolfish greed of the ring that has ruled the State for so many years, still—unless the State is to stand still or go backward—the expenses are bound to increase and the money must be found to meet them."

"One of the planks of my platform calls for the revision and equalization of the taxes," replied Governor Pinchot. "It may be possible not only to equalize the taxes, but to increase the income of the State and at the same time hold down the growing tax burden on the people. We can move in that direction by making the State to a certain extent self-supporting.

"You know," he continued, "the greater part of my life has been spent in the fight for conservation. The idea back of my plan is the fundamental principle that conservation stands for development. It means provision for the future, to be sure, but first of all it means recognition of the right of the present generation to the fullest necessary use of all the resources of the country. The second principle of conservation is the prevention of waste and the third principle is that the natural resources must be developed and preserved for the benefit of the many and not merely for the profit of the few.

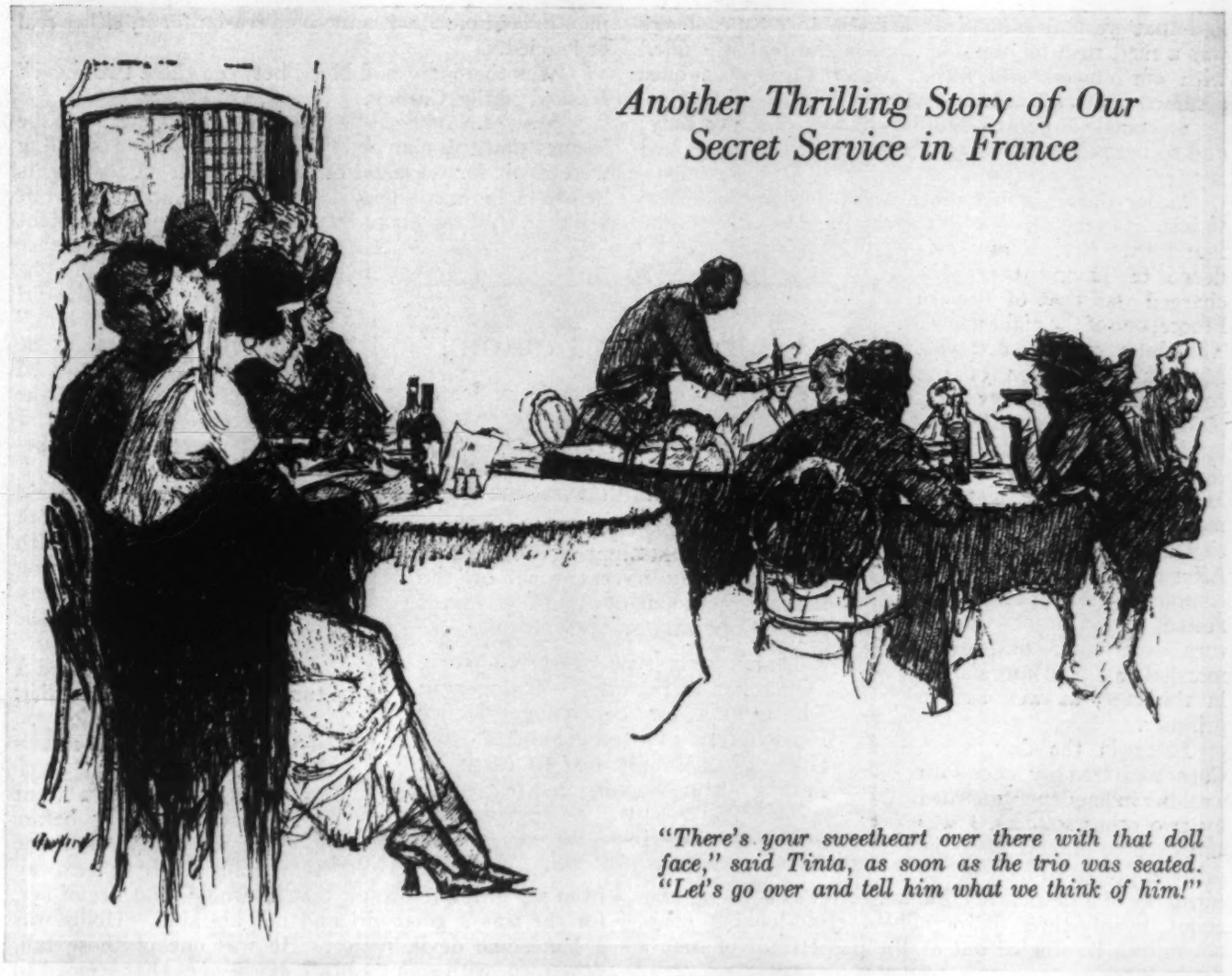
Governor Pinchot's Conservation Principles

"I AM eager to put these principles in operation in Pennsylvania. We have here every kind of natural resource that exists in the nation—forests, waterways, water power, mines. Great resources, like forests, water power, and others are held by the State. We are going to see that they are developed for the people. Private profit, without regard to the general welfare, must give way to the public good and the result in the end will be increased income for the State."

Governor Pinchot's conservation plan for Pennsylvania calls for a $25,000,000 bond issue to buy for the State 3,500,000 acres of idle and neglected forest land.

"The result will be an income for the State of several tens of millions of dollars a year," he said. "The State will not be made self-supporting by a good deal. I am not promising the impossible. But the State's income will be greatly increased, while at the same time, even if taxes cannot be lowered, at least the rate of increase can be held down."

Another Thrilling Story of Our Secret Service in France



"There's your sweetheart over there with that doll face," said Tinta, as soon as the trio was seated. "Let's go over and tell him what we think of him!"

The Gloved Hand

How A. E. F. Detectives Trailed the Real Murderer of "Pop" Hollis

By Major C. E. Russell

Author of "The Woman Spy of Biarritz," etc.

Illustrations by L. F. Wilford

A BELIEF in fatalism was one of the early psychological phenomena discovered among our men in France. Of those who had gone unscathed through battle, few there were who could not tell of queer pranks played by Fate. There was the case of Sergeant Hollis. Who could deny that Fate cast the die which drew him from the shelter of his tent on that wild night of August, or that the howling gale and driving rain through which he plunged were not grim settings prepared by Destiny for the enactment of tragedy?

On such a night "Pop" Hollis naturally would have been inclined to hug his quarters closely. Fate, however, willed otherwise. It led him out into the storm and to the tent of his crony, Corporal White of Squad A. Even then all might have gone well had not Fate again taken a hand, this time inducing Hollis to join the poker game in progress there, and, in so doing, sit with his broad back toward the flap of Squad A's tent.

Of the men in that poker game, Corporal White apparently was the only one who observed and remembered the quickly moving scene that followed.

"We had just raised the limit, and interest in the game was intense," White recalled later. "The only sounds were the muttered curses as some one lost, the demand for cards, and the rain's tattoo on the roof.

"Suddenly and silently the tent flap parted. A single shot—a crash—a scream of agony from Hollis as he collapsed and slid from his chair—a sound as if some one had slipped in the mud outside—then silence and the beating of the rain on the tent roof. In that intense, flashing moment, as I looked at the opened tent flap, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a gloved hand hastily withdrawn!" He paused, as if reliving that terrible moment, then went on quickly:

"For an instant we were dazed. It all seemed impossible, preposterous—as if the night itself had lifted an unseen hand to strike a deadly blow. Then, gradually, it dawned upon us that 'Pop' had cashed in his last chip,

NOTE.—Only certain names have been changed in this true account of an A. E. F. Secret Service exploit during the war.

and that we had allowed an assassin to escape. There was a mad rush for the door. Soon the tent was filled with our officers and men. Major Carney at once assumed control."

So ended Corporal White's own story of the tragedy; and so began our search to find the secret of the gloved mystery.

Major Carney's first move was to order his officers to inspect every revolver in the camp. The only gun he found that showed any evidence of having been discharged was that of Private Moore, one of the night guard. The major, not satisfied with Moore's explanation of the condition of his revolver, placed him in the guardhouse.

A few days later the investigation of the shooting was held in the office of the Commanding General of Base Section Number 2, at Bordeaux. After the testimony had been completed, the general suggested that Major Carney turn over to me, as provost marshal, all the information in the case, as well as the prisoner.

Later in the day, when Carney entered my office with a soldier in handcuffs, guarded by two other soldiers, I was surprised to observe that the prisoner possessed none of the earmarks of a desperate criminal. He was a young man about twenty-three years old—a clean-looking chap, not one to be singled out as the perpetrator of such a dastardly crime.

"Cherchez la Femme!"

THE extraordinary series of Secret Service disclosures by Major Russell appearing in McCLURE'S originally revealed some of the most romantic exploits of war-time spies.

The later articles of the series have been no less fascinating because of the light they have thrown on the actual methods of real-life secret service operatives.

In his next true detective story, "Cherchez la Femme!"—to appear in McCLURE'S for September—Major Russell tells of how a band of gem thieves was finally run to earth by finding "the woman in the case."

Moore Is Held for The Crime

"WELL, Moore," I demanded, "what have you to say for yourself? Better tell us the truth, so we can judge what's best to be done."

There was no hangdog expression about Moore. His frank gray eyes looked directly into mine as he answered:

"Major, I'm *not* guilty of this charge! I did *not* shoot Sergeant Hollis! It's true that my revolver had been discharged that night. I was on guard at the corral and I fired at a dog that was sneaking around, because I was afraid he would stampede the horses."

"Did any one hear this man's shot?" I asked, turning to Major Carney.

"No," answered Carney. "All of the men on guard denied having heard a shot. We were examining the revolvers when Moore sprung that tale on us."

"All right, Moore, go ahead with your story," I ordered.

"There's no more story to tell, major. I didn't do it, and I don't know who did," he insisted, with quiet dignity.

If this man had killed Hollis he was the coolest proposition I had ever encountered, I thought. Self-possessed even in the face of the terrible charge hanging over him, he showed none of the nervousness of a guilty conscience—no shifting of the eyes, no twitching of the hands or shuffling of the feet. Either his nerves were under remarkable control or he was innocent.

"There must be some motive behind this murder," I pondered. "Only a crazy man would shoot down a man in cold blood without some reason for it, either real or fancied."

"Was there any bad blood between these two men?" I asked Major Carney.

"Yes," he replied, "or so it seems to me. I have learned that this man and the man he is accused of killing were rivals for the hand of the same girl. A few nights before Hollis was killed, he met Moore and the girl out walking. When Moore returned to the camp that night Hollis met him at the entrance and told him that if he caught him bothering the girl again, he would thrash him."

Jealousy, then, might be the motive. Yet as I watched Moore, calm even when the major mentioned his girl, I couldn't bring myself to believe that he was guilty.

"All right, major," I said finally, anxious to be rid of him so that I might talk with Moore alone. "I'll send you a couple of my men in a day or so, to help you collect the necessary evidence."

When he had departed I turned to the accused soldier.

"Moore, I'm sorry for you if you did this, for it means hanging."

"Hang me, if you want to!" he cried. "But before God I'm not guilty! It's true that Hollis did drive me away from my girl, but I knew that he would soon tire of her, for she was a good girl and not his kind. Hollis was a handsome devil, major. He was one of those tall, lithe men, with snappy black eyes—eyes that seemed to hypnotize a woman; and many a victim has fallen before them, if you can believe all he said. He prided himself upon his ability to fascinate women—you know the kind. But I knew I could trust my girl and could afford to wait. See this!" He handed me a note. "She says there for me not to take any chances of getting hurt fighting with that man—for me not to doubt her, that everything will come out all right!"

The more I studied Moore, the more firmly I became convinced that he was the victim of circumstantial evidence and was innocent.

"Well, Moore," I finally told him, "I shall do my best to free you, if you are innocent, and to hang you, if the evidence points to you as the guilty man. I am going to send you to the guardhouse and there you must remain, while I try to unscramble this mess."

The Secret Service Plans

WHEN the sergeant of the guard had taken him away I carefully analyzed the evidence in the case. On the face of it, jealousy was the motive. The recently discharged revolver—no one except Moore to vouch for the fact that it was a dog he had shot at—everything pointed toward Moore as the guilty man. Yet I could not make the evidence coincide with the apparent sincerity and frankness of the accused.

Finally I decided upon a plan of action, summoned three of my operatives, and outlined it to them.

"Rich and Kirkland are to work in the open," I instructed, "while O'Malley is to work under cover. You two"—I designated Rich and Kirkland—"will proceed to

Suddenly and silently the tent flap parted back of Sergeant Hollis. In that intense moment, as I looked at the opening, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a gloved hand

Toulouse, where you will report to the commanding officer. Make it plain to every one you meet that you are from the Intelligence Department working on the murder. Just one precaution: Major Carney seems convinced that Moore is guilty and may unconsciously influence you to his way of thinking. Check up every lead that he gives you, but keep the results to yourselves. Work out in the open so that your activities will protect O'Malley, who is to work secretly.

"You, O'Malley," I continued, "will be regularly transferred to Company A. You are to pass yourself off as a recruit just in from the States. Work cautiously; listen to all the gossip of the men; but do not follow up any leads or clews you may dig up until I give the word.

Our man Berman will be our point of contact; report to him as frequently as possible."

Evidence is Gathered

O'MALLEY was the first man on the ground. He had been supplied with orders that definitely assigned him to Company A, as a replacement for Hollis. He experienced no difficulty in carrying out his part of the plan, for no one suspected who he was. By the time he was a full-fledged member of Company A, the other men had arrived at Toulouse. Presenting their orders at Battalion Headquarters, Rich and Kirkland boldly announced themselves to the orderly.

"Tell the major that we have been sent down by the provost marshal to investigate the murder of Sergeant Hollis," they said.

Before mess that night every man in the camp knew that two men from my department were in town.

"You two men follow my instructions," suggested Major Carney, "and we will soon clear up this investigation. Every atom of evidence points to Moore as the one who fired the fatal shot. Here is a list of the men who have a knowledge of the circumstances. If you need help, let me know."

"If it pleases the major," began Rich, "we would request that the soldiers whose names are on this list be summoned here for questioning."

"Right," agreed Carney. "I'll have them here at four o'clock to-day."

Four o'clock found Rich and Kirkland seated at a desk in the anteroom of Major Carney's office; while the hallway was filled with soldiers, waiting to give evidence.

"Yes, I was present when Hollis accused Moore of trying to steal his girl," testified one of the soldiers. "Hollis told Moore that he would give him an everlasting beating if he bothered the girl again. I also heard Moore tell Hollis he would get him if he had to wait a thousand years."

"Moore told me that he would kill Hollis if Hollis harmed a hair of the girl's head," reported another. "Moore seemed afraid that Hollis would injure the girl."

And so it went. Not one of the soldiers had a friendly word for Moore.

The girl who apparently was the cause of the tragedy was the next person to be interviewed. She would give us a new angle, we were confident.

"Yes, I knew both Sergeant Hollis and Private Moore," she replied to a question from Rich. "Mr. Moore has been my friend ever since he came to town. I never did like Sergeant Hollis; he was insulting. Before the murder I told Mr. Moore about something Hollis had said to me, and I found it difficult to restrain him from starting to the camp to have it out with the fellow then and there. You see, Mr. Moore and myself had planned to be married as soon as the war was over; and because of our secret understanding, he felt he had the right to protect me from the sergeant's insults."

The Noose Tightens Around Moore

WE had hoped that this girl would give us a real clew to follow—one that might lead us to some one else, instead of to Moore. Instead, while she was doing her best to help him, she was actually pulling the cord tighter and tighter around the neck of her lover.

My only hope now rested with O'Malley. If he should fail me, the only course left for me would be to go through with the prosecution, on the assumption that I had been fooled by Moore. O'Malley found it unexpectedly difficult to dig out leads from members of his company. All military organizations are more or less bound by cliques, and Company A was no exception. O'Malley was to all appearances a raw recruit—why should they take him into their confidence? Before he could be admitted to full comradeship, he must pass muster as a "regular fellow." It required time for O'Malley to win his spurs with his buddies, but at last he did it.

"Wanter go out on a little party to-night, O'Malley?" asked Corporal White, one evening, as the two were returning from the mess tent. "I've got a date with a couple of dandy girls who are real sports. Come along, if you want a good time."

"Do I want to go?" questioned O'Malley. "Well, you can tell the world I do!"

"At last I'm elected," he chuckled to himself as he went to his tent to dress.

"The woman I'm going to introduce you to," observed White, as the two were walking along the road toward the town, "is an old sweetheart of poor old 'Pop' Hollis."

"She must miss him, then," commented O'Malley, trying for a lead. "I suppose she was the only one he had?"

"Oh, no! Sarge was what you'd call a lady-killer. He was worse than any sailor—Pop had sixteen girls in every port. But let me give you a word of advice. If you take a fancy to this girl and she reciprocates, just watch your step; she's got a devil of a temper and a jealous streak in her. I saw her one night after she had had a glimpse of Pop with another woman. She was raving mad with jealousy. You know, on the quiet, I think Pop was afraid to come out in the open and tell her he was tired of her and was going to leave her."

"Well, she won't get me if I can help it," reflected O'Malley drily.

Tinta Enters the Case

"HERE we are," White finally announced when, arrived in town, they halted at the door of a typical French café. "Here's hoping you make a hit with the jane." He opened the café door and led the way to a table for four.

"Where are Tinta and Marie?" he questioned the waitress who brought the wine. "Tell 'em I'm here with a friend I want them to meet."

The news that White was in the café brought the two girls from a back room. Tinta, the former sweetheart of Sergeant Hollis, sat down beside O'Malley, while Marie devoted her attention to White.

And the game was on.

Tinta, a dark-haired beauty with snapping black eyes shielded by long black lashes, plainly was of Spanish ancestry. Not all of the fiery loveliness had been burned out in the consuming life she had followed; yet in her features appeared traces of hardening lines which no amount of paint or powder could efface.

"O'Malley has been sent here to replace Hollis," White confided to her. "Better treat him right, for he has lots of money and is a darn good fellow."

O'Malley, observing the changing expression of Tinta's face during this introduction, saw her flinch ever so little as Hollis' name was mentioned; then her eyes glittered ominously.

"For all the world like a rattler's, just before he strikes," was the way O'Malley described that look of hers the following day when he met Berman—the operative through whom he was to make his reports to me. "Tell the major," he instructed Berman, "that at last I have struck a real, live lead. Have him hold up the trial of Moore until we can sift this. I may need help on it very soon."

Our search for the slayer of Hollis now reduced itself to a battle of wits between O'Malley, with his Irish shrewdness, on one side, and the girl, with her Spanish cruelty and cunning, on the other. O'Malley met her as often as possible. For a long time she seemed indifferent to his blandishments, although she was more than willing to share his wines and accept his gifts. Yet O'Malley persisted; for by now we were convinced that locked up behind that flashing pair of eyes was the solution of the mystery. The problem was how to force her confidence.

O'Malley's love-making finally won him the place in the girl's heart that formerly had been occupied by Sergeant Hollis. He became her accepted lover—a position that allowed him a certain latitude, which he was not slow to grasp.

"Say," he begged one night as they sat over their wine glasses, "am I the first and only man you ever really loved? Tell me the truth, Tinta," he added after a pause.

Tinta looked him straight in the eye. She seemed to be weighing her answer carefully.

"No, my dear," she said at length. "One other man occupied the place in my life that you do, and—that—man—is—dead!" The words came haltingly. "I'm not one to be played with, then discarded for the next pretty face," she went on quickly. "Remember that, my dear, if you ever feel like flirting with any one else!" Again O'Malley saw the flash of venom in her eyes. He was no coward, yet the cold chills ran along his spine.

Later, the memory of that meeting haunted him, and he decided that if he were to carry out his plan of action successfully it would be necessary to have assistance. He watched his chance, and when some of his buddies came into Bordeaux on leave, he joined them.

"You see, it's like this: she's no ordinary woman," he

"Oh, what shall I do?" sobbed Celeste. "Berman has left me, and I don't want to live without him!"

explained, when I teased him for running away from a woman. "A devil dressed up in women's clothes—that's what she is. I'll admit I'm up against it in handling her and I need your advice. I can't induce her to tell me a bit more than she already has. But you can bet that she knows far more than she will tell. She knows who killed Hollis."

"Here's how we shall have to handle it, then," I decided. "We'll take a leaf from Tinta's own book and see if we can't beat her at her own game. I'll transfer Berman to Company A. Then, after he is settled in his new assignment, I'll send Celeste down. You keep on with Tinta, but be on the watch to see that she doesn't shoot you in the back. After Berman and Celeste arrive, keep it a party of four: you and Tinta; Berman and Celeste. Stay together; don't let the party break up, if you can help it. Help Celeste win the friendship of this woman. Eventually, one of you will get at the bottom of the mystery."

After some discussion I managed to get the commanding general's approval of the transfer of Berman to Company A. And, with the order for Berman's transfer in my hand, I hurried over to the hotel, where Berman and Celeste were to meet me.

"Berman, you are to be transferred at once to Company A, at Toulouse," I told him. "You must be ready to leave this afternoon. Celeste will follow you there as soon as you are ready to start your work.

"Celeste," I continued, turning to her, "when you reach Toulouse your work will be to become acquainted with a frequenter of the *Café Nationale*—'Tinta' is her name. O'Malley will arrange for the introduction. You are to try to win her friendship. Make her your companion; confide in her. Berman will pose as your sweetheart and you two will join O'Malley and this girl. Arrange it so there will be only the four of you. Just as soon as you have won the girl's confidence, Celeste, see if you can persuade her either to live with you in an apartment or to invite you to live at her home. When you and Berman have carried out these instructions let me know, and I will arrange for the next move. We must work fast, for the general is anxious to clear up the case."

Another Recruit for Company A

AND so Berman, dressed in the uniform of a private and with the rest of his equipment stowed away in his barrack bag—for all the world like a raw recruit just in from the States—arrived at Toulouse.

"Here's another recruit for your company," grumbled Major Carney to the captain of Company A. "It's a wonder they wouldn't send us a real soldier for a change."

During the first few days at camp Berman was a busy man. They gave him no time for relaxation with their "rookie" drills, kitchen police and guard duty. But as soon as the work eased up he obtained a pass to visit the town with O'Malley.

"Tinta, I want you to meet a pal of mine," said O'Malley, after the two men had entered the café. "We both played together as kids, and joined the army at the same time. I left him at Bordeaux when I was sent here, but we eventually fixed it up so we could be together again. Don't you know of some nice girl we can get for him? If we can find one, the four of us can have a good time by ourselves."

"You needn't bother," laughed Berman. "I've got as nice a girl as I want, right now. The only unfortunate thing is that she's in Bordeaux while I'm here."

"Why not have her come down here?" suggested Tinta. "I'll look after her."

"That's mighty good of you," Berman told her. "If you will take her under your protection, I'll do it."

I knew that my plans were progressing well when I opened Berman's letter next day and read his message: "Send Celeste along."

"It's time to go. Celeste," I told her. "Good-by and good luck!"

Celeste Takes a Hand in the Game

CELESTE was quick to take advantage of the other woman's offer of protection. Within a few days she was overjoyed to hear Tinta say: "I'll tell you what let's do! Let's cut out this café life. You come to live with me at my home. The two boys can come there, and we four can have some jolly times together."

"Fine! I'll gladly do it," responded Celeste. "I'll move to-day, so we can surprise the boys."

"I've got her where I want her," was the laconic message I received from Celeste. "We are ready for the next move."

That message was a life-saver for me. I had been dreading the daily conferences upstairs with the general. I was afraid he would force my hand. Now I could tell him I was going out of town on a case. I intended to take good care, too, that he didn't see me again until I had this mystery solved.

Late that night, a motor car quietly slipped out of the city. Marguerite—one of the most fascinating and brilliant of my operatives—was curled up on the rear seat.

Before morning Marguerite and I were safely hidden away in a small inn on the outskirts of Toulouse.

When I sauntered into town that morning, I was dressed in civilian clothes. My only disguise consisted of a pair of colored glasses and a cap pulled well down over my face.

Finally I found my way to the camp of the Americans. There, seated on a bank, I waited for O'Malley or Berman to come along. O'Malley came first. As he passed me I whispered the name of the inn where I was staying and told him to meet me there with Berman early that evening.

When they arrived I rehearsed with them the parts they were to play in the final scenes. Celeste was to receive her instructions from Berman, as opportunity offered. The two men returned to the town to set the stage for what we hoped would be the last move in the baffling case.

When night came, O'Malley and Berman escorted the girls to the *Café Nationale*. A short time after they had entered, Marguerite and I followed. We seated ourselves at a rear table, in such a position that Marguerite would be facing Berman.

"Say! O'Malley, that's some peach that just came in with that man!" whispered Berman, loud enough for both of the girls to overhear.

The Trap Is Set

FOR the rest of the evening Marguerite and Berman carried on a persistent flirtation. It was cleverly done; sufficiently noticeable to attract the attention of the two girls, yet not bold enough to cause a disturbance.

The next night O'Malley called at Tinta's house alone. He told Celeste that Berman had said he was not going out.

"Guess he wasn't feeling very well," volunteered O'Malley. "Anyway, let's go over to the café for a drink and a little music."

When the trio entered the café they saw Berman

seated at a table deeply engaged in conversation with Marguerite.

Pretending that she did not see them, Celeste left it for Tinta to mention Berman's evident dereliction.

"There's your sweetheart over there, with that doll face," said Tinta, as soon as they were seated, pointing to a table across the room. "He didn't stay at the camp, after all. When he said he was sick, it was only an excuse for coming here with that girl. Let's go over and tell him what we think of him!"

"No! No!" wailed Celeste. Then, turning to O'Malley, she begged, "Please take me back to the house. I can't bear to stay here another minute!"

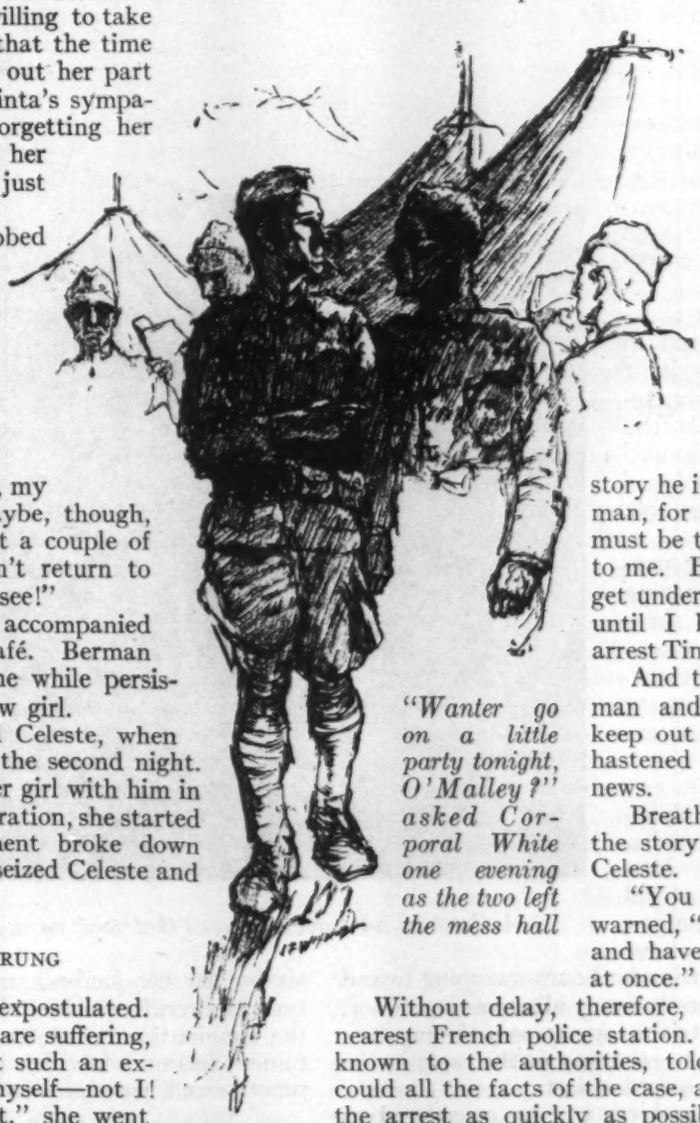
O'Malley was only too willing to take them back home. He knew that the time was ripe for Celeste to carry out her part of the plan—to play upon Tinta's sympathies in such a way that, forgetting her own danger in the sorrow of her friend, the girl would tell us just what we wanted to know.

"Oh! What shall I do?" sobbed Celeste, as soon as the two girls were alone. She threw herself upon the couch in a simulated paroxysm of grief. "Berman has left me! I cannot go back to my own home now, and I don't want to live without him!"

"I know just how you feel, my dear," consoled Tinta. "Maybe, though, it's some one he knew. Wait a couple of nights, and then if he doesn't return to you—— Well, just wait and see!"

For two nights the girls, accompanied by O'Malley, haunted the café. Berman openly flouted Celeste, all the while persistently making love to the new girl.

"It's no use, dear!" cried Celeste, when the two returned home after the second night. "I can't stand it to see another girl with him in my place." In apparent desperation, she started for the door. That movement broke down Tinta's reserve. Quickly she seized Celeste and forced her back to the couch.



"Wanter go on a little party tonight, O'Malley?" asked Corporal White one evening as the two left the mess hall

The Trap Is Sprung

"DON'T be foolish!" she expostulated. "I know just how you are suffering, for I once went through just such an experience. But I didn't kill myself—not I!

"Once I had a sweetheart," she went on. "His name was Sergeant Hollis. Often we talked of being married as soon as the war was over. He seemed a nice fellow, and in him I saw my one chance of escaping from the life I was living. Then, one night, he left me—for another woman. The next time I saw him I accused him of not caring for me any more, and he laughed in my face. I asked him about his promise to marry me, and the brute told me he never had intended to marry me at all. No man could ever treat me that way and get away with it—never!"

"Wh-what d-did y-you do?" stammered Celeste.

"I waited and watched until I was sure. Then I decided that if I couldn't have him, no other woman should. The night I determined to punish him, I slipped out in a driving storm. In the darkness I found my way to his camp, and shot him down!"

"Weren't you afraid of being found out?" asked Celeste.

"No. I had seen to that. I had dressed in old clothes, with a waterproof over my shoulders. Hollis had left a pair of his riding gloves here one day and he had given me his army revolver. I put on the gloves, so that no one could see that a woman's hand held the revolver.

"I stood outside the tent where he was and thrust my gloved hand through the flap. Then I shot. I ran back here and hid the gloves and my water-soaked garments under the eaves, where they are now. I'll hunt up that revolver and to-morrow night we'll put on the old clothes and walk out toward the camp. When Berman passes on his way to meet that other woman, we'll shoot him," she added coolly.

Celeste had solved our problem now. But she faced a new problem that we had not foreseen. She must get the information to me before Tinta could carry out her threat to kill Berman.

Therefore, watching her chance, she slipped out while Tinta was asleep and hurried to the camp. When O'Malley heard her story he immediately warned Berman, for he realized that Berman must be told even before he came to me. Berman it was who must get under cover and remain there until I had an opportunity to arrest Tinta.

And then, after warning Berman and cautioning Celeste to keep out of the house, O'Malley hastened to me with the good news.

Breathlessly, he poured forth the story that he had had from Celeste.

"You protect Celeste," I warned, "while I go to the French and have them make the arrest at once."

Without delay, therefore, I hurried over to the nearest French police station. There I made myself known to the authorities, told them as briefly as I could all the facts of the case, and urged them to make the arrest as quickly as possible in order to prevent Tinta's escape, in case she should have been warned of our plans.

Private Moore Is Saved from the Gallows and Tinta Escapes Arrest

JUST as the police crashed down the door that Tinta had refused to open for them, she sent into her own heart the bullet intended for Berman.

Upon the table lay the clothes she had worn the night of the murder and the gloves that had concealed her identity. And lying beside her was the revolver which, only a short time before, she had turned upon her faithless lover.

Dying, she unwittingly saved Private Moore from the gallows.

Don't Miss this Graphic Article on the New Romance of Aviation

How Real Birdmen Fly

By Edward P. Warner

Marvelous Soaring Exploits As Seen Through an Expert's Eyes

NO MORE spectacular exploits have been chronicled in recent years than the famous soaring flight experiments that the French, British and Germans have been carrying out abroad.

Within a few months these experiments have resulted in the development of a light monoplane with a 7-horsepower engine, in which the French pilot Barbot soared over the English Channel and later performed remarkable flights in this country.

An American engineer presents herewith a fascinating first-hand report of last summer's historic gliding contests, which he personally witnessed, and from which extraordinary advances in aviation are expected to result.

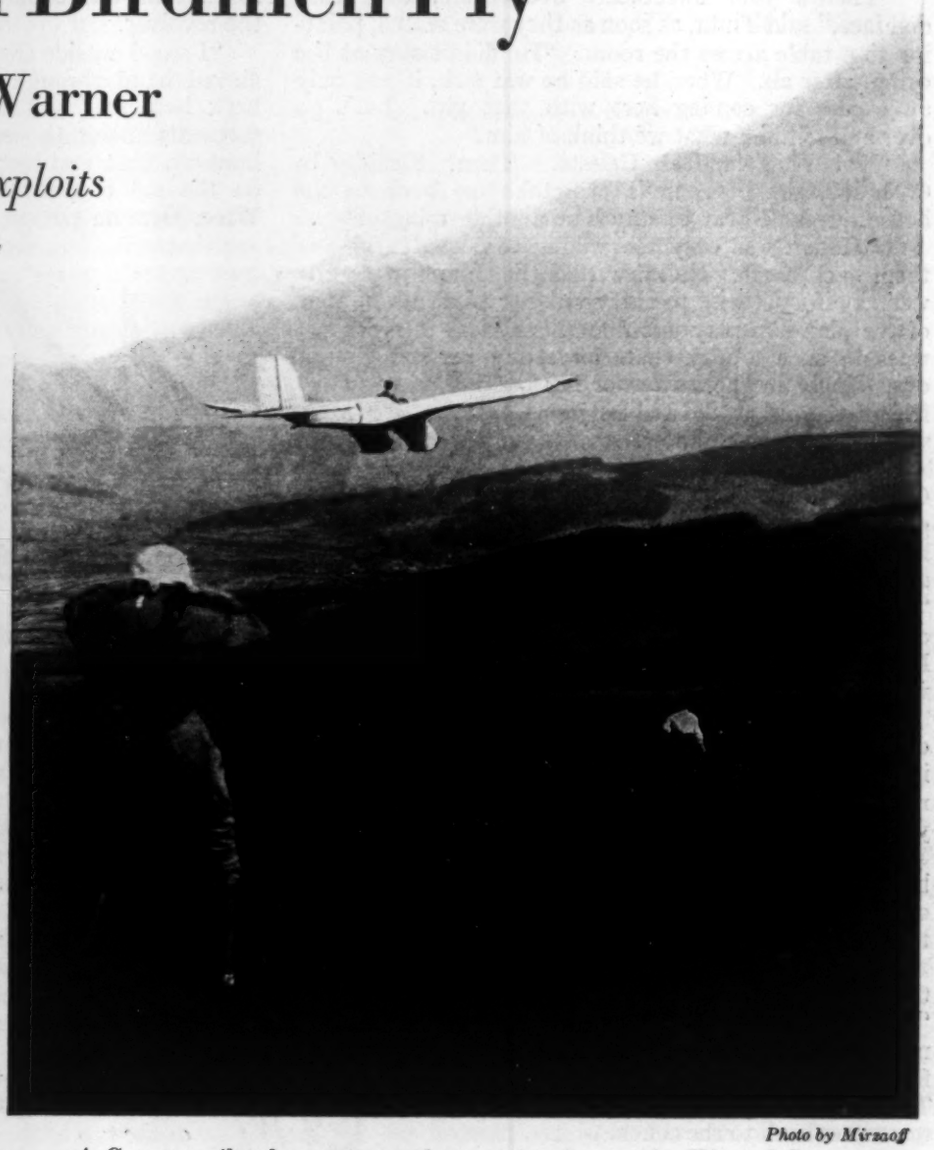


Photo by Mirzaoff

A German pilot demonstrates that soaring is now the King of Sports

STRANGE stories of flying men have been coming from Europe lately. Men have been traveling at will without the aid of engines, climbing to great heights above the starting point and cruising for hours, sweeping to and fro as silently and as effortlessly as any albatross or condor.

It now begins to look to the layman as if the mystery not vouchsafed to Solomon—the way of the eagle in the air—were veritably to be solved at last.

Whether or not the problem can be considered as being fully solved, the performances accomplished in Germany, France, and England during the past year are so far beyond anything previously thought of as practicable that they are fairly awe-inspiring, and they grow more and more impressive on closer acquaintance. Without being in any particular mysterious and without requiring the intervention of magic to explain them, the engineless flights of Hentzen and Maneyrol and Barbot and others are greater in reality than in imagination, and have to be seen to be appreciated to the full.

Gliding experiments in Europe recommenced soon after the war. The glider—much used from 1890 to 1910—had been laid aside as a means of experiment when the engine-driven airplane came into common use, but it was brought back in 1920 for political, rather than for scientific reasons.

So it was that defeated Germany, forbidden the air by her conquerors, turned to the glider as the one type of aircraft which could not by the widest stretch of the imagination be construed as having a military usefulness and on which her pilots might therefore keep in practice and her engineers continue their experiments.

The First Rhön Soaring Competitions

THE first German soaring competition was held in the Rhön mountains—the site of some gliding trials before the war, as well as of almost all the successful engineless flights in Germany since the Armistice—in the summer of 1920. The longest flight on that occasion was made by Herr Klemperer, a distinguished aëronautical engineer and inventor, in a monoplane built by himself and some of his associates at a German technical school.

Klemperer's flight lasted but five minutes. It was only a beginning, but even at that it was not highly encouraging, for as long ago as 1911 Orville Wright had made a ten-minute glider flight from the North Carolina dunes.

In 1921, the gliders returned to the Rhön and considerably bettered their flights of the previous summer, Klemperer making a flight of thirteen and one-half

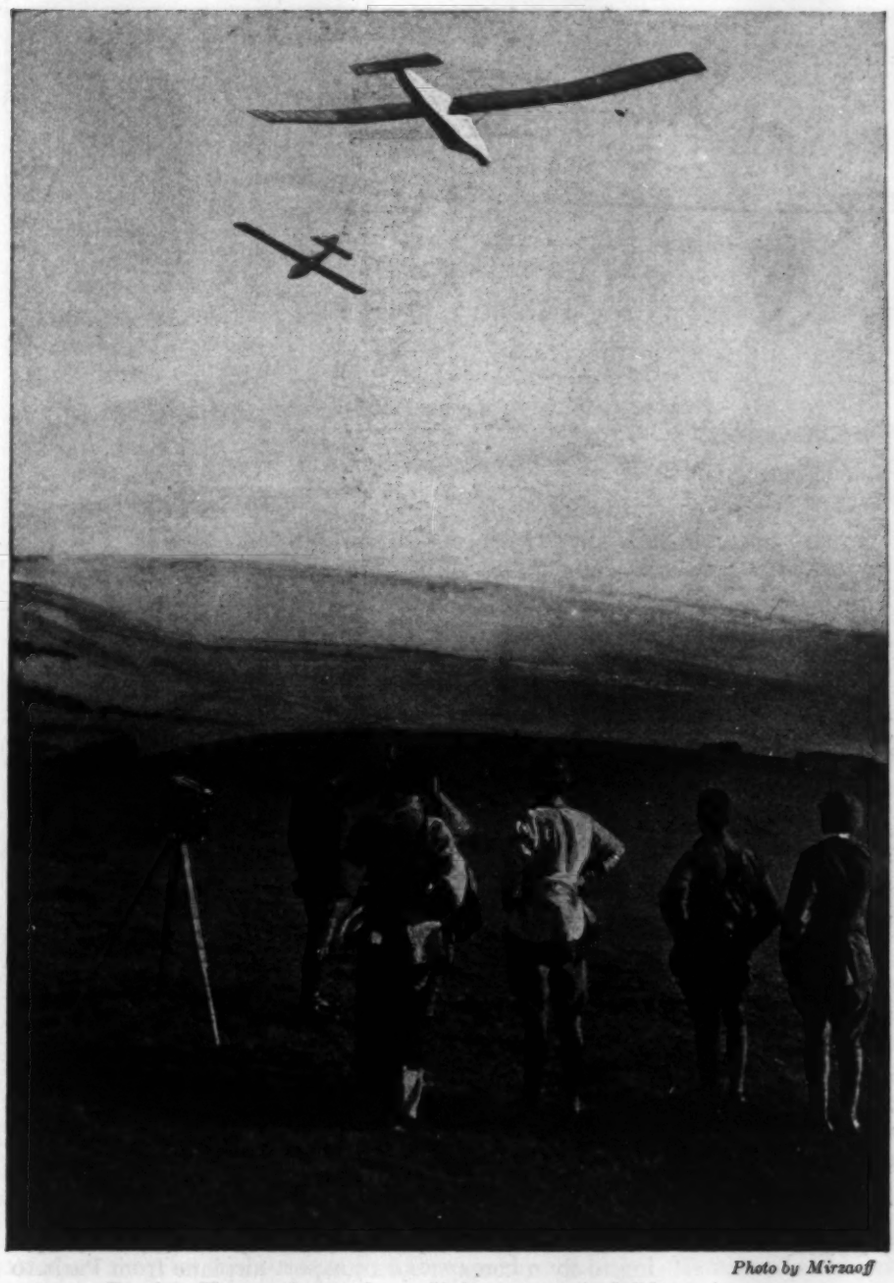


Photo by Mirzaoff

During Hentzen's two-hour flight over typical Rhön country

minutes, while Martens—a student at the technical school in Hanover—remained in the air for fifteen minutes and forty seconds. Several of the flights covered over three miles, measured in a straight line. The glides of Klemperer and Martens broke all previous records, and it became evident that a new chapter was being started in the story of the motorless airplane. Plans were immediately made for another competition in the Rhön, and interest began to be shown also in other parts of Europe.

And, therefore, some time later announcement was made of plans for a glider meet to be held in southern France during last August. The Swiss also prepared for several competitions, while individuals in other nations where there was insufficient interest to warrant the holding of a meet prepared to build gliders and to compete in Germany or in France.

For two years I had read the meager and often obviously inaccurate accounts of the German achievements which leaked out to this country, and my interest had been aroused to a point where I finally determined to go and see for myself what was happening. I arrived in Paris a few days before the beginning of the French meet, which started and finished a little earlier than the German one, although the two unfortunately overlapped. The French flights were scheduled to take place from the Puy de Combegrasse, one of a large group of volcanic hills in picturesque Auvergne, about twenty miles from Clermont-Ferrand and two hundred miles south of Paris. Clermont-Ferrand already had a direct hold on my interest, for during the war it was the site of Camp Mouillard and of a great flying school where many Americans were trained for their battles over the lines.

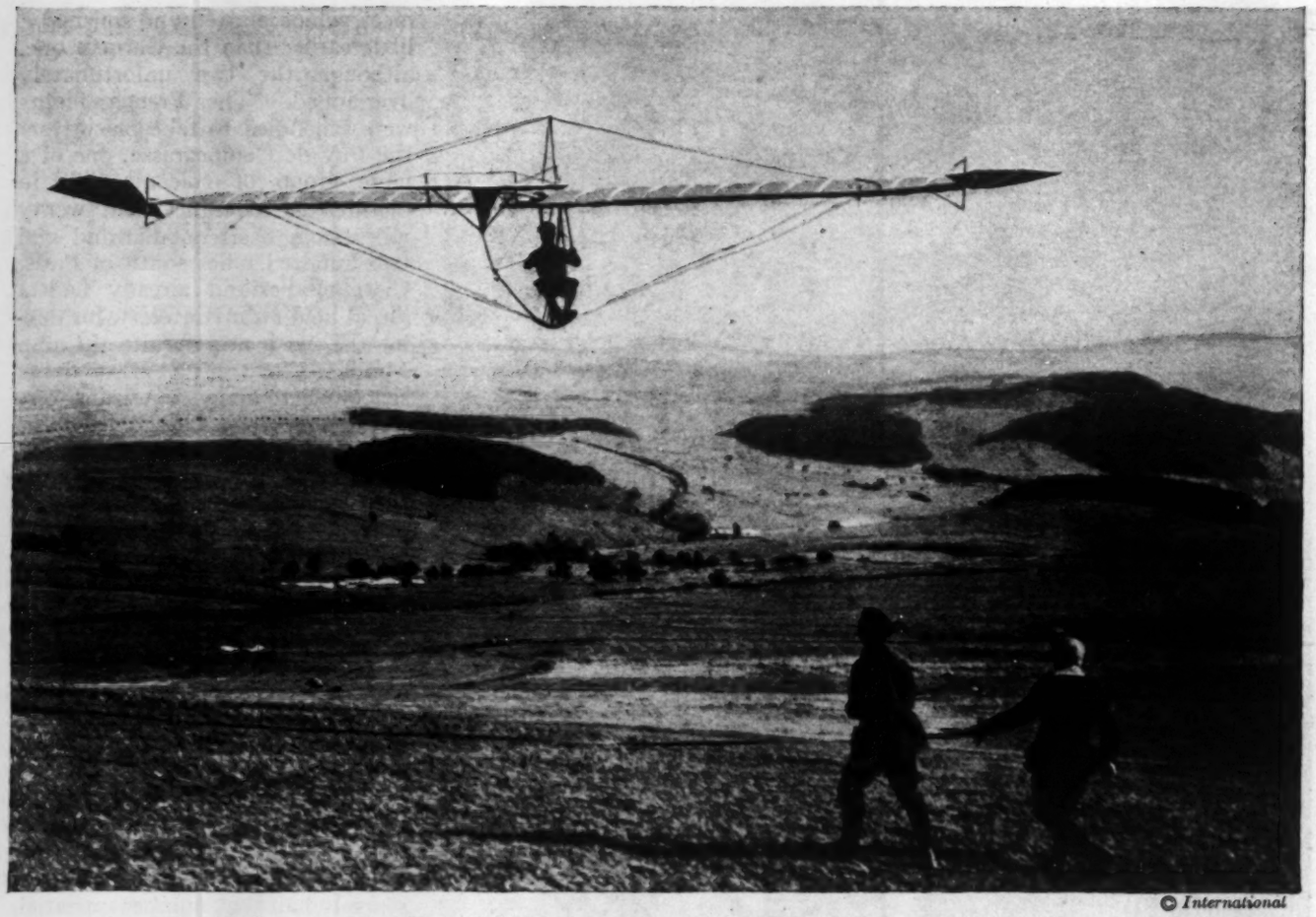
Despite the inaccessibility of the place the visitors at Clermont-Ferrand included a large proportion of distinguished French aëronauts. Not only famous test pilots, but also engineers and scientists had been drawn to the hills of Auvergne to see what the motorless airplane could do and to aid in starting the French effort under the best possible auspices.

The French Meet in Auvergne

THE entry in the French meet aggregated fifty gliders, but scarcely half that number appeared, and only a dozen made flights of more than a few seconds' duration. Among those actually on the scene were one American and three Swiss, all the rest coming from some part of France. The American glider had been designed and built by a group of students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It was piloted in the competition, as well as in its preliminary trials in America, by Mr. Edmund T. Allen, an engineering student who had been a crack test pilot of airplanes for the Army Air Service and other departments of the American government during and after the war.

The first attempts from the Combegrasse were not encouraging. The beginning was made by the Swiss entrant, Chardon. Two of his machines were of the most rudimentary type, similar to those on which schoolboys hazarded their necks a dozen years ago. Entirely lacking controls, the pilot hung from the lower wing by his arms, and maintained stability by shifting his weight—wearing hobnailed shoes for ballast and swinging his legs wildly to one side or the other in accordance with the exigencies of the moment. It appeared a precarious business and one having more relation to acrobatic skill than to the development of aëronautical science, but, surprisingly enough, Chardon made some long and steady flights.

In the meantime the Americans and the other European competitors had been working feverishly to get ready for flight. The American glider was ready to go into the air on the third day, ahead of all but one of the French entrants. Wearily the glider was dragged up the hill, and Mr. Allen took his seat and tried the controls. After long speculation as to the best method of launching, it had been decided to use a rope fastened around two



© International

An intrepid German flier, Herr Schultz, in an ingenious glider of his own construction, for which he was awarded a special prize at the Rhön meet

hooks fixed in the nose of the machine. Several men were to seize the rope and run with it until the glider had gathered sufficient speed to take it into the air. The towing party were then to stop, whereupon, as the glider passed over their heads, the rope would go slack and fall off the hooks.

Bossoutrot Makes Longest Flight

EVERYTHING went according to schedule. Allen took off perfectly before we had towed him ten feet, and passed thirty feet above our heads. Fighting the wind, seeking advantage from every gust and eddy, he progressed down the hill and came gently to rest at the bottom of the slope after fifty seconds.

On the day of the American machine's first attempts there had been no counterattractions. The next morning, however, several of the French competitors were ready for a trial.

The arrival of a number of gliders on the hill top at the same time created a new problem in getting them back to the summit after their several flights, and it looked for a while as if each machine would be limited to one flight a day. There were many gliders and only a single tractor, and it took nearly an hour for the tractor to go down and collect a glider and tow it back for another start, while the glider itself was able to travel from the top to the bottom in about a minute. The transportation difficulties thus created were intensified by occasional mechanical troubles with the tractor.

But the French competitors, like Mr. Allen, gradually improved their performances as time went on. The record was raised by slow and painful stages to two and a half minutes, and then, on the last day, several pilots suddenly "found the trick," as one of them jubilantly expressed it, learning how to take the greatest possible advantage of rising currents of air. On that day two machines stayed aloft for over four and a half minutes. The longest flight lasted five minutes and eighteen seconds and was made by Monsieur Lucien Bossoutrot, a well-known French test pilot.

Bossoutrot became famous three years ago in attempting to fly a commercial transport airplane from Paris to Dakar, in French West Africa. Unfortunately, the pilot and his passengers had to finish that particular journey on camel-back and somewhat behind their schedule, as overheating of the engines forced them to land in the desert a few hundred miles short of their intended destination. The extraordinary versatility of a successful test pilot was demonstrated a few days before the glider meet when Bossoutrot carried out successfully the trials of a new giant airplane equipped with four engines and weighing about twenty thousand pounds. On the completion of those trials he flew from Paris to Camp Mouillard in a miniature sporting plane with a fifty horse-power plant, landing in front of the camp in a field hardly larger than a tennis court, and then proceeded immediately to experiment with a glider which weighed, without the pilot, only about sixty pounds, less than the weight of any one of the four propellers on the giant machine.

Coupet Wins Second Place

CURIOUSLY enough, the pilot who took second place in the duration competition at the French meet, with a flight of a few seconds under five minutes, was also on the Paris-Dakar trip just mentioned, serving

TWO EXTRAORDINARY PHOTOGRAPHS

A QUARTER of a century separated the taking of the two pictures on these pages. In that period the airplane was perfected, and then, by a curious sequence of events aviators returned to experiments in gliding, so that the year 1922 saw the pilot shown at the left undertaking elaborate soaring flights in a plane superficially not unlike the primitive glider in which Otto Lilienthal (at right) performed his pioneer experiments.

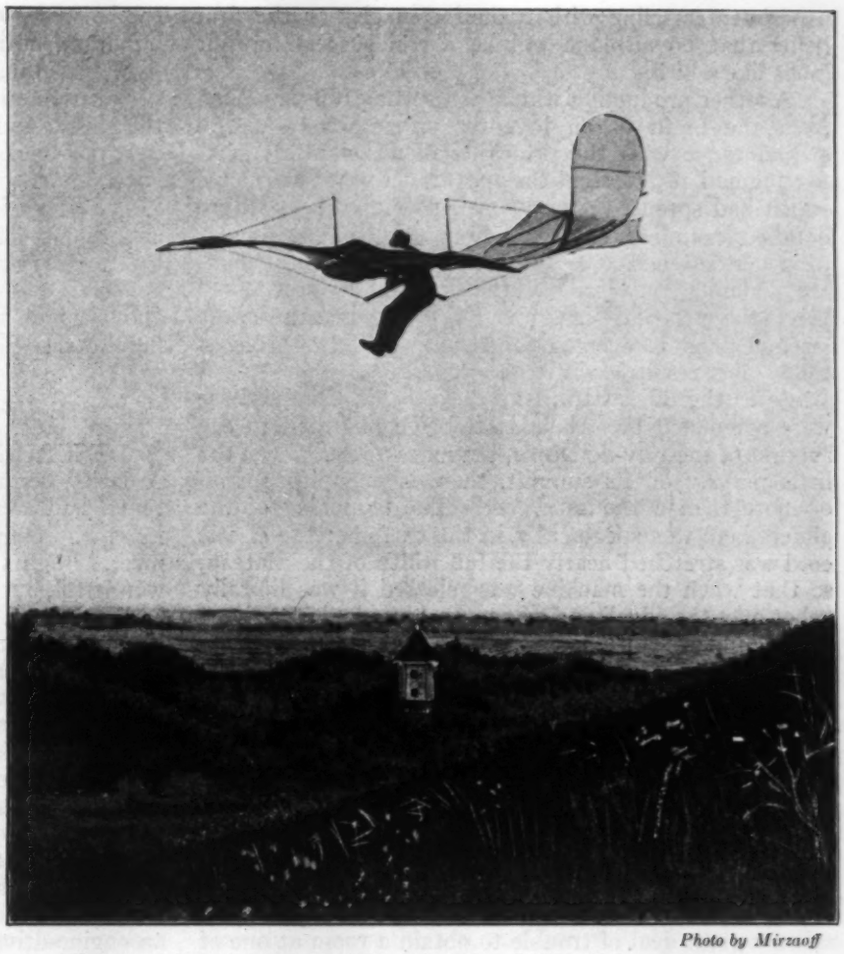


Photo by Mirzaoff

Photograph taken in 1896 of Otto Lilienthal, pioneer of aëronautics, soaring at Stöllen, near Berlin

as one of Bossoutrot's crew. Chauffeuring a camel must be excellent training for soaring flight. Coupet appeared at the meet with a very light glider designed and built by himself, and he himself piloted it with success throughout the two weeks.

METHODS OF LAUNCHING

THE American machine was unfortunately not among those present on the closing days. During the first six days of the competition Allen's flights were the center of interest for French and American spectators alike, and he had more time in the air during that period than all other competitors combined, but misfortune then arrived. One of the men pulling on the rope to assist in getting off stopped running, thinking that the glider was in the air, and it came bowling down the hill and struck him with one wing. Swinging around violently on one wheel and dragging the rear of the body sideways as a result, the machine was badly damaged, although the pilot was not even shaken up or thrown from his seat.

That minor accident was chargeable to the method employed for launching. Pulling off with a rope was very satisfactory in reasonably strong winds, but when the wind was light it was impossible to run fast enough to lift the machine off the ground. Most of the pilots thereafter adopted the scheme—originally developed in a slightly different form in Germany—of projecting the glider into the air with a catapult. A piece of rubber cord about two hundred feet long was passed around the hook on the nose. A dozen volunteers were then obtained from the crowd, four of them being assigned to each end of the elastic cable, while the remainder held the glider stationary. Finally, the cable was stretched to some three times its original length, and the glider, being released, was shot into the air as effectively as a pebble is flung from a sling shot. Occasionally the hook on the nose of the glider straightened out under the tension, or the cable broke before it was fully stretched, whereupon the broken part of the hook was projected into the next county and the good men and true holding the ends of the cord promptly and unitedly fell down the hill. Those who had been through that experience once or twice maneuvered thereafter to secure for themselves the job of holding the glider and innocent novices were dragooned into service to stretch the recalcitrant and dangerous cable.

The glider competitions stirred in me strong recollections of the first airplane meets twelve years ago, for all the inventors who were then engaged in constructing airplanes of grotesque form, and whose futile attempts to fly provided light comedy relief, seemed now to have turned with enthusiasm to the glider. I recall with particular affection the machine built in imitation of a Madagascar bat and covered with brown fabric to preserve the zoölogical illusion to the utmost. The inventor preserved an intense secrecy as to his plans, but even casual inspection of the machine during the meet showed it to be fitted with a most elaborate system of controls which permitted the pilot, by dint of violent calisthenics with hands, feet, and shoulders, to flap and twist and wobble the wings in every conceivable way. Unfortunately, the flexibility of the structure was such that the slightest load on the wings caused them to start fluttering all by themselves, without any encouragement from the pilot. As the mechanical bat gathered speed the lifting surfaces deflected gently upward, but the wheels remained obstinately on the ground.

FREAK GLIDERS AFFORD AMUSEMENT

IT is a curious fact that nearly all of the inventors of freak aircraft attempt to make a slavish imitation of nature, constructing mechanical birds or bats or bumblebees, regardless of the fact that no successful vehicle has ever been built in a form closely resembling that of a living creature. Neither the wheel nor the screw propeller nor the car nor the tread of a caterpillar tractor finds close analogy in nature, yet a multitude of patient

experimenters cling with pathetic tenacity to the firm belief that no airplane will be a real success until it looks like a bird.

Another production which had sprung full-panoplied from the brain of an inventor unhampered by any acquaintance with the principles of aëronautical engineering had at first sight the appearance of a Ford coupé which had sprouted a very small pair of wings. More detailed examination revealed at the front a minute propeller designed to be driven by the efforts of the pilot. By pedaling very rapidly the intrepid aviator could drive the propeller fast enough to produce a breeze strong enough to overcome the heating effect of his exertions. Net result, exactly nothing.

After the official trials at the Puy de Combegrasse were completed the whole assemblage migrated to the summit of the Puy-de-Dôme, ten miles away. From the little plateau on its summit, there is precipitous drop of more than a thousand feet. The launching of the gliders here was spectacular in the extreme: the elastic cord was stretched nearly the full width of the plateau, so that when the machine was released it was literally "shot over the edge" and was several hundred feet above the ground within a few seconds. Half a dozen pilots made successful glides from this lofty point, the best results being obtained by Douchy, whose biplane held the air for over nine minutes and covered a distance of several miles, but the performances recorded hardly seemed to justify the hazard.

As the French meet approached its close I began to turn my thoughts toward the German competition and finally I set out for the Wasserkuppe by way of Paris.

I had written to a German acquaintance to warn him of my impending visit, and he had, fortunately for me, taken a great deal of trouble to obtain a room at one of the hostelries in Gersfeld—the nearest village to the hill where the meet was to take place.

The Third Rhön Competition

THE *Dritte Rhön Segelflug Wettbewerbs*—Third Rhön Soaring Flight Competition—had begun to be in evidence long before I reached Gersfeld. A newspaper picked up in Frankfort announced that several flights of about ten minutes' duration had been made during the first ten days of the meet. When I arrived at Fulda, on a Sunday afternoon, I took a walk through the streets while waiting for my train to Gersfeld and my eye was caught by a bulletin posted in a store window, reciting that Martens—the man who made the duration record in the preceding year—had made a flight of one hour and six minutes late in the afternoon of the previous day. This announcement increased tenfold my eagerness to get to Gersfeld in order to see these things for myself.

It was too late to go to the summit of the hill when I arrived at Gersfeld that afternoon, but my anticipation was further increased by another bulletin posted before the hotel. This one had been received by telephone from the hill late the preceding afternoon and stated that Hentzen, in the Hanover glider, had been in the air for an hour and fifty-five minutes and had not yet landed. It was a fitting introduction to the headquarters of human soaring.

The hill from which the flights were made, and which I ascended early the next morning, is the Grosse Wasserkuppe. It is the highest peak in the Rhön mountains and is located in Hesse about sixty miles southeast of Frankfort. The height above sea level happens to be almost exactly the same as that of the Combegrasse, but the actual amount of drop available for gliding purposes is much greater, as the slope continues for a long distance to the west, with a total descent of more than fifteen hundred feet in two and a half miles.

When I finally reached the summit of the hill, I found very little activity there. The wind was light and from the south, and it was explained to me that long glides were possible only when it came from the west. But late in the afternoon Hentzen brought out his Hanover glider for another trial. Launched from the hill top by means of a rubber cord, he started cross-country, passed across two ranges of hills and the intervening valleys, circled over Gersfeld, and then started back, retracing his path for about a mile before landing. The total duration of the flight was twenty minutes.

Hentzen's Remarkable Flight

I DESCRIBE this performance with some particularity because it was the first long motorless flight that I had ever seen and because I thought it about the most impressive thing that was done at the German meet. Flights of two or three hours' duration are very wonderful, but when the manner of their accomplishment is appreciated they seem no more extraordinary than similar aërial excursions lasting for a much shorter time. It is quite evident that a man who can circle above a given spot for an hour, gaining altitude all the time and without the expenditure of fuel, should be able to continue the performance for three hours or ten, if the conditions remain constant.

Hentzen's straightaway flight just described was particularly extraordinary because there was no evidence of a variation of the course to seek favoring currents of air and because the pilot seemed to have perfect control of his glider, handling it exactly as he might have handled an engine-driven airplane, traveling straight from point to point along a path which sloped so slightly that it was almost impossible for the casual observer to detect any drop below the horizontal. In fact, my first feeling, like that of most other observers seeing the thing for the first time, was one of incredulity. It seemed that there must be some optical illusion, that something in the lay of the land was deceiving me as to the extent of the slope or that there was an engine hidden away somewhere.

There were more gliders present at the German meet than there had been in France, and there were fewer freaks, most of the eccentric productions having been weeded out by the judges' committee before the competition actually started. Some, however, departed widely from the accepted idea of an airplane, and one or two of that group flew very successfully. The most notable example was the Schultz glider, which had no rudder and which used a scheme of control radically different from any employed on present-day airplanes.

Herr Schultz Wins Special Prize

HERR SCHULTZ is a Prussian school-teacher and former airplane pilot. He had great difficulty in obtaining satisfactory materials for the construction of his glider and at first glance it seemed to have been made from old soap boxes and broom handles and odd scraps of the cheapest muslin. Nevertheless, Schultz made a great number of flights with uniform success, the duration ranging up to about five minutes for a single flight, and was finally awarded a special prize for the ingenuity of his construction and his own persistence and skill.

On the last day of the German meet Hentzen shattered all previous records by staying up for three hours and ten minutes, taking off in the middle of the afternoon and remaining aloft until after dark, when bonfires had to

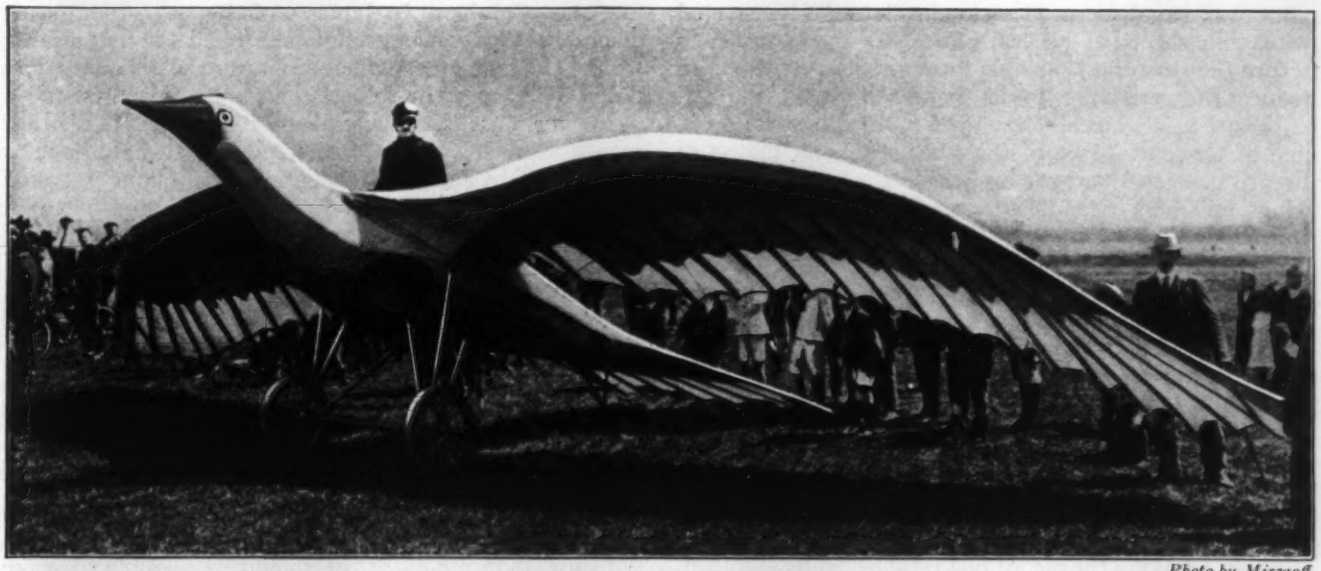


Photo by Mirzaoff

A curious birdlike glider entered in the German contest. Most of the freak planes designed in imitation of living creatures were failures in flight

be lighted to give him illumination for landing. In the course of that record glide he attained a maximum height of 1150 feet above the starting point, an altitude record which was unchallenged for nearly six months.

Scepticism as to Records

THERE were scarcely a dozen foreigners present at the Rhön meet, including only four Americans, but when I finally returned to the United States I found great curiosity on the subject of the gliders and rather general scepticism as to the reality of their reported records. The scepticism prevailed, to be sure, only among those not directly connected with aëronautical work, and it arose from a total inability to reconcile preconceived notions regarding flight with the idea of a man cruising around in the air for three hours without visible means of support.

Since they could think of no rational explanation the special writers on some of the newspapers had cheerfully set themselves to work on the task of providing irrational ones. Consequently, the public was furnished with lurid accounts of the manner in which German scientists sat solemnly for days on end studying the behavior of sea gulls in a cage and of a mysterious chemical with which Hentzen and his associates and rivals painted their faces in order that they might develop the "bird sense" and profit by the oncoming fluctuations of the wind. The newspaper theories were so entertaining that one regretted that they had not the slightest relation to the truth.

As a matter of fact, there is nothing mysterious about it. Long glider flights can be accounted for in accordance with the ordinary principles of physics and without the necessity of invoking the aid of magic or voodooism or of attributing to the pilot a sixth sense of any sort. The glider simply floats on a rising current of air. To do this successfully requires an excellent pilot, a machine of high efficiency, and a hill well suited to the purpose, but given those three things in combination the possible duration of flight is almost unlimited.

A glider launched in still air would of course travel along an inclined path, just as an airplane does when the engine stops, losing altitude gradually and ultimately coming to earth at a more or less distant point, the length of the glide depending primarily on the height of the hill from which the start was taken. If, however, a wind is blowing up the hill it may carry the glider upward more rapidly than it would normally settle in still air, and the net result will then be a gain of height.

The theoretical possibility of that procedure has been realized for a great many years, and its practical possibility was first demonstrated in the fall of 1911 by Mr. Orville Wright, one of the famous pair of brothers who designed and built the first airplane to make an actual man-carrying flight. Mr. Wright took off with his glider from the North Carolina sand dunes, with a strong wind blowing in from the sea, and hovered almost motionless above his starting point for ten minutes, showing conclusively that man, like the soaring birds, could sustain himself in the air indefinitely without power, if the wind held true.

In 1922, Hentzen did what Wright had done eleven years before, but the greater efficiency of Hentzen's glider made it possible for him to carry out the process in very light winds, when the speed of his glider would quickly have carried him ahead against the wind beyond the slope of the hill and out of the zone of rising currents. To prevent this the pilot worked back and forth along the hillside, traveling in a series of ellipses and figures of eight, patrolling the same beat over and over again, staying always in that region where the wind was being diverted by the hill in such a way that it had to blow upward. Only during the last few minutes was he able to go off across country, gradually descending in a straight glide, using the altitude already acquired in the endeavor to make a record for distance which would match that for duration. As yet, however, no one has succeeded in covering a distance of ten miles in a glider flight.

Hanover Gliders Most Successful

THE gliders which achieved the greatest successes in Germany were very much of the same type. The adjective "birdlike" is badly shopworn in connection with airplanes, and its application there is generally highly inexact, but it really describes better than any other term the Hanover gliders used by Martens and Hentzen and others. They were monoplanes, and all of the bracing of the single wing was contained inside the wing itself, so that not a particle of wire nor an exposed strut or rod was to be seen. The wings tapered toward the tips, again following the bird parallel. The

pilot was snugly stowed away inside a body covered with thin sheets of veneer, great care being taken to secure the smoothest possible form for that body and to reduce the resistance to its motion through the air.

The French machines showed a somewhat different line of thought. Two of the most successful gliders of French construction were biplanes, with two superposed wings, and most of them had some wires running from the wings to the body to support the wings and prevent them from yielding to the air pressure, instead of following the German practice of using thick wings and housing all the supporting members inside.

The majority of the gliders which made successful flights were similar in general form to the ordinary airplane but there was an occasional surprise, and the greatest thrill of all was furnished at the English meet—which succeeded those in France and Germany—by a French pilot, Maneyrol, on a machine of distinctly unusual design. Maneyrol succeeded in patrolling to and fro over the face of the ridge for three hours and twenty minutes, breaking the record just established by Hentzen. His achievement had particular significance for Americans, since the monoplane he used had two wings of almost equal size arranged in tandem. That was the form of airplane which the late Professor Langley introduced in this country and with which his extraordinary experiments above the Potomac were carried out twenty years ago. It is especially interesting that the type chosen by Langley for his experiments should have triumphed at last in the field of motorless flight, for it is to Langley that we owe the first presentation of a means whereby soaring could actually be realized without the use of rising currents.

Explanation of Long Flights

IN his famous monograph on the "Internal Work of the Wind," Langley showed that it was at least theoretically possible for flight to be indefinitely maintained without power in a wind of pulsating velocity. The gusts of increasing intensity could be used to raise the machine to an altitude which would only be partly lost during the succeeding glide in a wind of diminishing velocity as gusts died away, and the net average result would be the maintenance of a level path or an actual gain of height. If the wind were everywhere gusty and the pilot could foresee the nature and extent of those gusts it should be possible for him to travel indefinitely without power, and without adhering closely to a friendly gradient.

So far as duration is concerned, experiments succeeding those that I witnessed have made even the remarkable flights of Hentzen seem very small. Maneyrol established his record at the English meet last October. In January of this year, Lieutenant Thoret, a French army pilot performed the astonishing feat of stopping the engine of an ordinary airplane while flying at a low altitude and continuing to soar without power for more than seven hours thereafter. In another month Maneyrol regained the crown, raising the time to just over eight hours, and still another half hour was piled on that within a few days by Barbot, flying in northern Africa on a Dewoitine monoplane—a machine especially characterized by the great flexibility of the rear part of its wings, obtained without sacrifice of the requisite strength and rigidity of the principal elements of the structure.

Possibilities of the Glider

THERE seems to be no reason now to set any maximum limits to the duration that can be made. By finding a satisfactory location in the trade wind belt where the winds blow up the side of a hill day and night with unfailing regularity, it should be possible to make duration records far beyond those which can be equaled with an airplane, which must carry a fuel supply and descend when it is exhausted.

The navigating of a glider, however, is rather an exhausting occupation, requiring constant vigilance, and if time in the air continues to be pushed upward we may yet see Glider Pilots' Local Number 1 organizing and presenting its demands for an eight-hour day and three-shift system on duration flights.

Whether the duration record for gliders, however, is three hours or three days or three weeks has ceased to be of scientific interest except to physiologists who may desire information on the capacity of the human organism to endure prolonged strains. At present a much more important type of test has to do with distance covered in flight. The ability to get somewhere has considerably greater practical significance than the power to remain soaring over one spot for an indefinite time.

Great dreams have been indulged in regarding the possibilities of the glider. The attitude of general

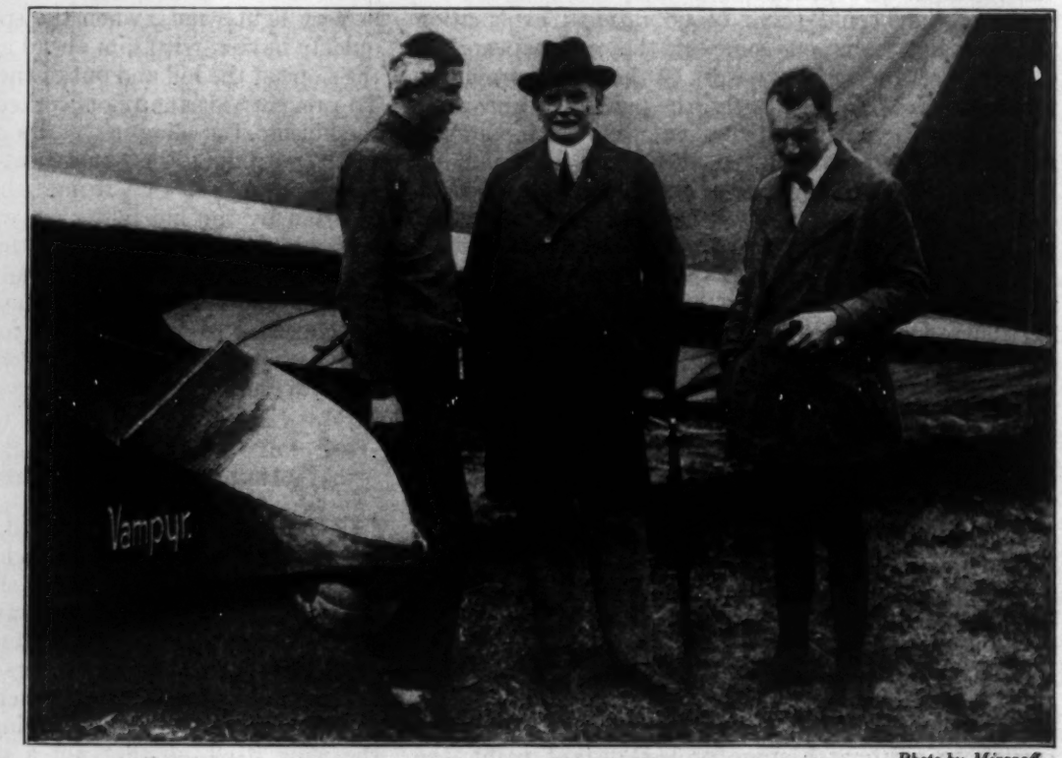


Photo by Mirzaoff

Martens at left and Hentzen at right—Germany's two record-breaking glider pilots talking with ex-Minister Lewald beside a typical glider

Photo by Mirzaoff

Clement triplane glider, piloted by Sardier, in the French contest held among the hills of Auvergne

scepticism which, at least on this side of the Atlantic, first met the news of German and French achievement quickly gave way in many quarters to an almost fanatic enthusiasm, to a willingness to believe anything. Highly imaginative prophecies found their way into print, portraying in lurid fashion the manner in which the next generation's argosies of commerce would be borne silently, swiftly, and effortlessly through the air. Giant soaring machines were to cross the Atlantic, devoting to cargo the space and weight-carrying capacity which an ordinary airplane would have to reserve for power plant and fuel. The prospect envisaged seemed to border on perpetual motion and so far as the present position is concerned, we are about as near to realizing one as the other.

Place of the Glider

THE optimism of such forecasts is obvious when we observe that even that most experienced of soaring machines, the gull, frequently has to flap in order to maintain his position when following a ship, and it is interesting to note the efforts of the gulls to find and stay poised over a favorable spot, where the motion of the air around the ship which they are following creates a rising current. As soon as they get out of position they start to beat their wings in an endeavor to return.

It is conceivable that the time may come when soaring flight will have some direct commercial utility. At the present time it has none. The problem of sitting on top of a rising column of air has been solved, but the far greater problem of traveling to and fro at will where there are no rising currents of air, or, alternatively, of charting a course from point to point which will always offer air conditions favorable for soaring seems little nearer solution that it was a decade ago. No one has yet given actual proof of ability to use the internal work of the wind, concerning which Langley wrote.

The glider remains what it has long been—a valuable instrument for certain sorts of research, an implement for a most delightful sport—beside which ski-jumping seems tame to the habitué—a useful school of training for pilots—all of this, but nothing more. Its potentialities in those directions, however, justify the interest which it is now arousing throughout the world and which seems likely to settle down to a sane determination to use the motorless flying machine in every way possible as a supplement to the true airplane.

Inaccessibility of Soaring Localities

IT may be remarked at this point that the one characteristic which all localities favorable for gliding appear to possess in common is inaccessibility. In France, transportation from Clermont-Ferrand to the site of the competition could be had only in a bus which ran once a day, in a covered motor truck fitted with long plank seats, which was operated at irregular intervals, or in a miniature taxicab whose struggles with the mountain roads provided an opportunity for interesting speculation as to the probability of being able to complete the trip in it.

Since it would obviously have been impossible for the whole body of officials, competitors, reporters, movie men, and miscellaneous hangers-on to make the journey to and fro each day the French Army had come to the rescue, and we found awaiting us at the foot of the Combegrasse a camp, complete with hangars for the gliders, tents for our own lodging, restaurant, bar, and portable shower baths, which, like the bus, ran every now and then.

There was even a tent designated as a "lecture hall," but more frequently used for dances. No effort was spared to satisfy our wants, and the tourists who complain so loudly of having been robbed in Europe should have visited Camp Mouillard, for lodging there was free to all comers and board was only ten francs a day—eighty cents—including wine in unlimited quantities. In fact, the authorities were so prodigal with the wine that they even insisted on our washing in it, the water for ablutionary purposes being brought up the hill in wine casks on motor trucks. These casks had not been completely drained of their original contents before refilling, consequently the "water" drawn from them had a tint and aroma which would have made it contraband here.

In Germany, transportation to the summit of the Grosse Wasserkuppe was conducted on the principle of every man for himself. Though a coach was scheduled to make two trips a day, its capacity was booked long in advance. The road up the hill was quite impassable by automobile, and we therefore "hiked" up from the village each morning and back at night—a distance of about six miles each way along a mountain trail.

Keen Interest Shown by Students

AT both meets it was interesting to note the keen enthusiasm of students from technical schools in the exhibitions. In Germany, certain of the student groups were so hard hit by the gyrations of the mark that they were forced to walk for long distances, pulling their gliders behind them on hand carts.

In France, the avidity with which the great airplane manufacturers seized upon this new type of aircraft seemed significant. Half a dozen French firms were represented among the competitors at Camp Mouillard.

The impressive gateway to San Ramon Prison, in Zamboanga, on the beautiful island of Mindinao

Our Prisons in the Philippines

Where Ex-Convicts Become Self-Respecting Citizens of Their Communities

By Philip Kerby

PART II

SEVERAL weeks after the visit to Bilibid Prison, described in my article in the July McCLURE'S, I chanced to be in the beautiful southern port of Zamboanga on the island of Mindinao, the site of the San Ramon Penal Farms. Ships of all nations come to this island for copra, hemp, sisal, and other tropical products. The city itself, however, carries with it a brisk atmosphere not unlike many towns in California and many of the houses are built in bungalow style, which is due in a large measure to the influence of the American population.

The Penal Farm is located at the end of a picturesque white-coral road, following the shore line and arched overhead with giant royal palms and mango trees, interspersed for variety with the glorious flame tree of the Moros. Major C. A. Spaeth, U. S. A., who is the temporary head of San Ramon, personally conducted me over the farm and the prison itself.

The rectangular prison, enclosed within high concrete walls is in the center of an enormous coconut plantation of some eight thousand trees, which are but a small portion of the 65,000 trees comprising the farm. The prisoners are for the most part indigenous to the southern group of the Philippines, comprising many Moros as well as a large percentage of Christian Filipinos. The majority of the Filipino prisoners —Christians—were originally committed to Bilibid, but were transferred to San Ramon by virtue of their good conduct records, and are occupying places of trusty foremen or are in charge of work sections, according to their knowledge and ability. There are also four prominent Moro chieftains from the Island of Jolo, who were unable to keep the peace and are therefore temporarily incarcerated.

Although there was a prison at San Ramon during the Spanish régime, it was not until General Pershing became military governor of the Moro Province, in 1912, that the present prison was constructed along the most modern lines under his supervision and that of Doctor Waller H. Dade, formerly a surgeon in the United States Army.

THE essential difference between Bilibid and San Ramon is that at San Ramon after a prisoner has established his good conduct record, the length of his sentence is reduced and he is permitted to go in or out of the prison at will. Once he is accorded this "Liberty" privilege, he aligns himself with one of the work gangs clearing new ground for cultivation, or he participates in the activities of the fishing fleet which is decidedly remunerative, or he may take up laundry work, since the steam laundry at San Ramon supplies the wants of the

population of Zamboanga, and several trips per week are made in the motor delivery carts.

Prisoners whose good conduct record has shown exceptional merit are allowed to bring their wives and children to San Ramon and build habitations for them. The prisoners are allowed to be with their families a certain portion of each day, but are forced to report to the prison every night.

The discipline within the prison itself is pseudo-military. With the exception of the paid guards, the "officers" are lieutenants, captains, and a major—selected by popular vote of the prisoners themselves. These officers are responsible to the superintendent for the maintenance of excellent order within the prison walls. The "officers" have their own mess separate from the trusty privates, while the major is admitted to the European mess.

IMAGINE a convict, just out of prison, proudly exhibiting his prison discharge as the best reference he can offer when seeking a new job and a chance to make good!

This is precisely what the Philippine prisoners do. It is striking evidence of the evolution in penal methods which has made the United States prisons in the Philippines the most advanced in the world.

This is the second of two articles in which Philip Kerby presents a fascinating word picture of these remarkable institutions..

THE prisoners raise their own vegetables, poultry, and cattle; they manage their own corn mill, dairy, sawmill, carpenter and blacksmith shops, as well as their own tailoring establishment. The Penal Farm is self-supporting with the exception of tea and salt, which are sent from Manila.

Whatever produce is raised above the needs of the farm is sold at the open market in Zamboanga. However, the chief activity of the farm is the production of copra.

Until the Americans took over the administration of San Ramon, cultivation of its coconut trees was considered a waste of time and the natives throughout the islands still believe that it is possible to make copra merely by chopping the coconuts open and drying the meat in the sun. As a result usually one third or one fourth of the crop treated in this way is ruined either by rain or heavy dews which cause mildew.

To-day at San Ramon the trees are kept in excellent condition. The various larvæ which attack the leaves and fruit are killed by scientific sprays, bore worms are removed by barbed spoons resembling curved fishhooks, and the soil beneath the trees is kept clear of underbrush and fertilized. As a result, a tree that previously yielded ten to fifteen nuts now yields thirty to forty. Exceptional trees sometimes yield as many as eighty or ninety nuts. A copra drier—which resembles a brick kiln, except that the degree of heat maintained is not nearly as high—has been installed with good results. Now more than 90 per cent of the crop is harvested and sold at top prices.

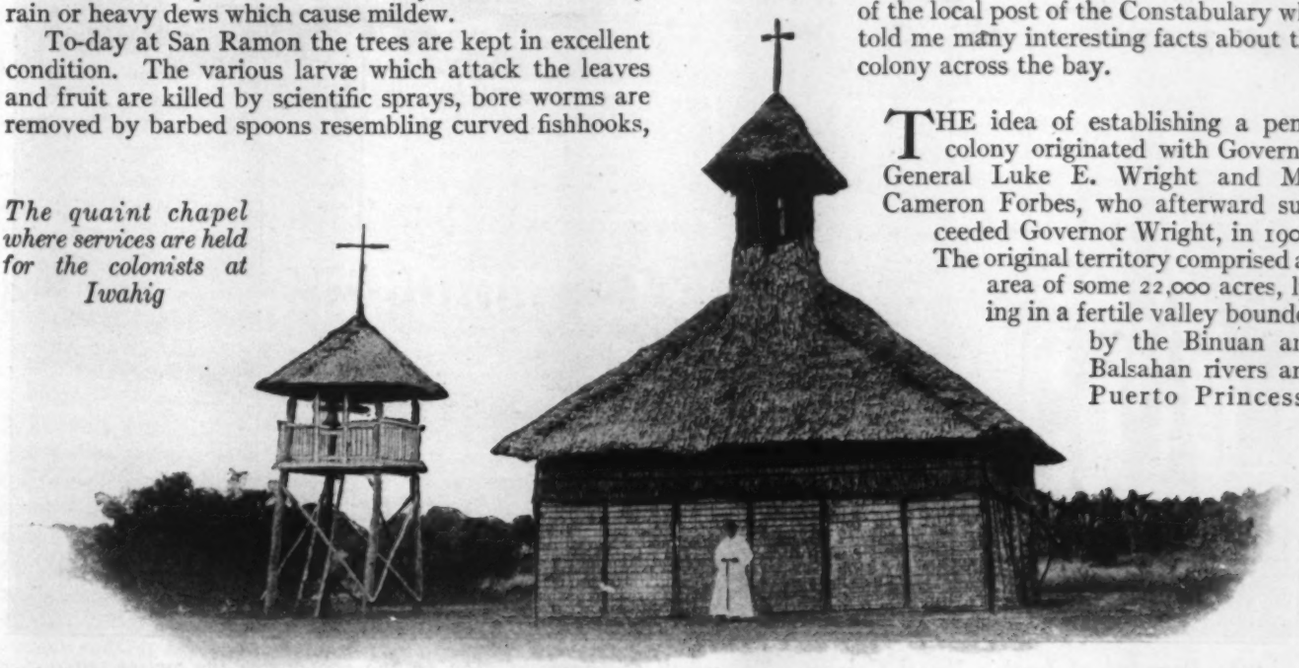
The work and the organization of San Ramon, interesting though it was, seemed very like Bilibid, and I was anxious to proceed to Iwahig, where every one assured me I should find a unique type of Penal colony.

Consequently, I left Zamboanga and after two days' sailing into the sunset, past islands and over summer seas that surpass the far-famed Inland Sea of Japan for beauty and grandeur, I arrived at dawn in one of the most beautiful ports in the world, Puerto Princessa—the Port of the Princess. The harbor is practically landlocked. On the west lies the island of Palawan, which was utilized formerly as one of the great bases of the Spanish Fleet, since access to it from the China Sea is comparatively easy.

The channel here is rather narrow and runs between treacherous coral reefs, but after entering the bay, the water appears like a placid mirror set in a glorious, waving, green frame composed of palms and mango trees. In springtime the surrounding hills are dotted with the white splashes made by the blossoms of the candlenut tree. The town of Puerto Princessa, on the verdure-swept island of Palawan, carries with it all the atmosphere of old Spain. The houses, with their cool patios, are nearly all pure Spanish in architecture and are set behind high walls.

Shortly after my arrival I talked with several officers of the local post of the Constabulary who told me many interesting facts about the colony across the bay.

THE idea of establishing a penal colony originated with Governor General Luke E. Wright and Mr. Cameron Forbes, who afterward succeeded Governor Wright, in 1906. The original territory comprised an area of some 22,000 acres, lying in a fertile valley bounded by the Binuan and Balsahan rivers and Puerto Princessa



The quaint chapel where services are held for the colonists at Iwahig

Bay. In 1912, the original grant was greatly extended until today it includes approximately 410 square kilometres—220 square miles. The present site of the Central Colony was formerly a Spanish agricultural settlement, but became a portion of the United States Public Lands following the Treaty of Paris at the conclusion of the Spanish-American War.

Plan of the Iwahig Penal Colony

I ALSO learned that Ramon Victorio, the superintendent of the colony, is the only Filipino holding such a responsible post. When I met Mr. Victorio shortly afterward I realized why he held it. He is a big man—big both mentally and physically. He is over six feet tall, and his straight, military carriage makes him seem even taller. The curious gentleness and grace of manner characteristic of all high-caste Filipinos is immediately apparent in him.

Superintendent Victorio took me in his launch across the sparkling blue waters of Puerto Princessa Bay. During the trip he told me something of the plan behind the Iwahig colony.

At Bilibid, a prisoner who has served one fifth of his total sentence may state his desire to become a colonist and may make application to the director of prisons to be transferred to Iwahig, providing of course that his conduct rating is excellent. After the application has been passed by the director of prisons, by the secretary of justice, and has received the approval of the governor general, the prisoner is sent to Iwahig under guard.

Upon his arrival at the penal colony the former inmate of Bilibid ceases to be called a prisoner, and is known instead as a "colonist" and as such enjoys many more privileges than do prisoners in any other penal institution or colony in the world. The privileges granted are always commensurate with the prisoner's merit, conduct, fidelity, and the length of time served as a colonist. He is even permitted to contract marriage. Moreover, through exceptional meritorious services and fidelity his pardon may be recommended to the governor general and, upon receiving same, he is eligible for appointment as an employee or official of the colony.

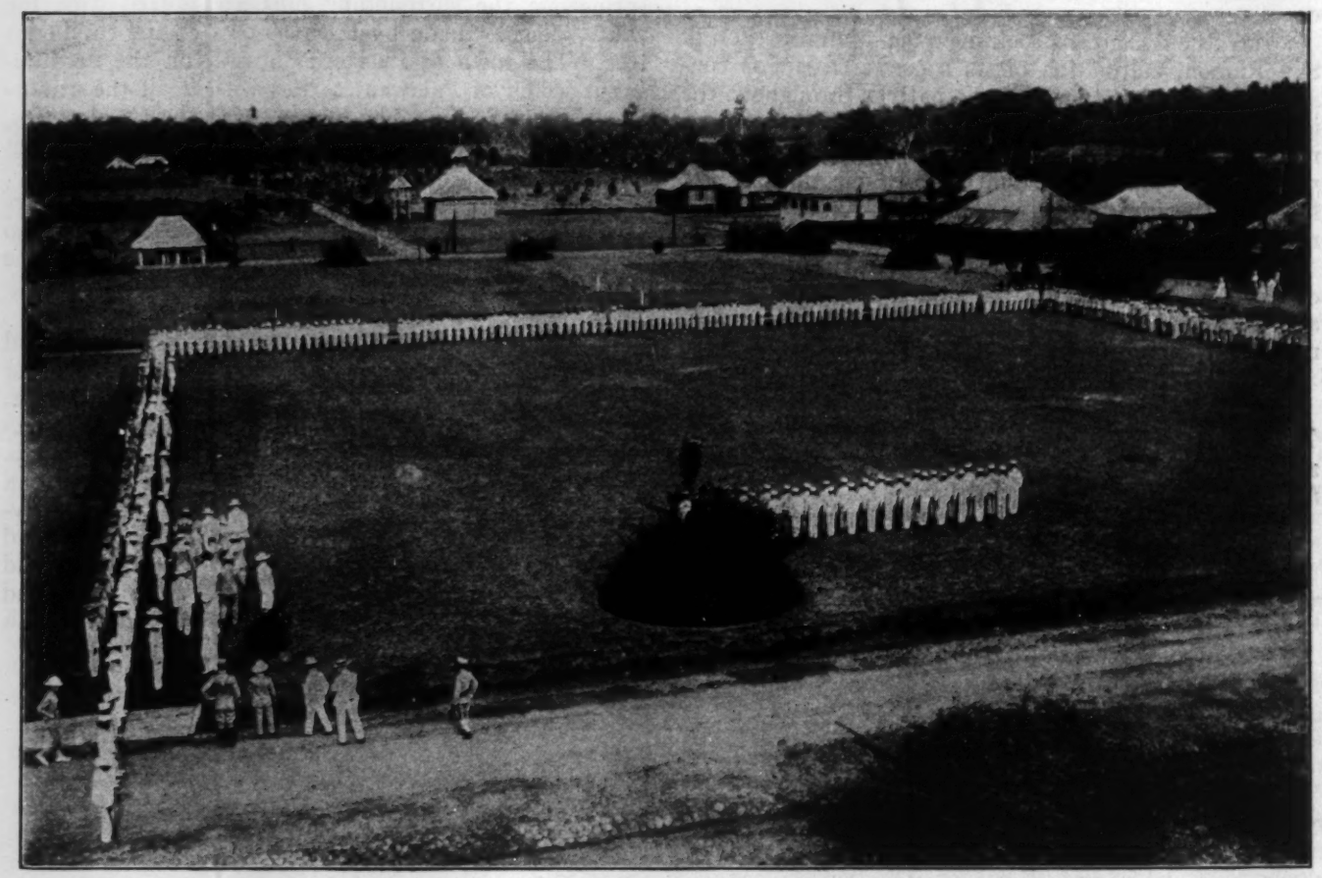
At the present time only the superintendent, assistant superintendent, colony chaplain, chief clerk, cashier, live-stock foreman, and farming instructor are not ex-colonists. Curiously, a colonist who is a graduate physician and who is serving a term for bigamy manages and looks after the welfare of the local hospitals.

The tide was making fast when we rounded the black-and-white spindle buoy at the entrance to the Binuan River. We passed the outer fishing station and it was here that I got my first glimpse of colony life. Several colonists were in the act of hauling up a large seine at the entrance to one of the fish traps. They stopped their work, and, holding tight to the seine with one hand, stood erect at rigid attention and saluted as we passed some five hundred yards away.

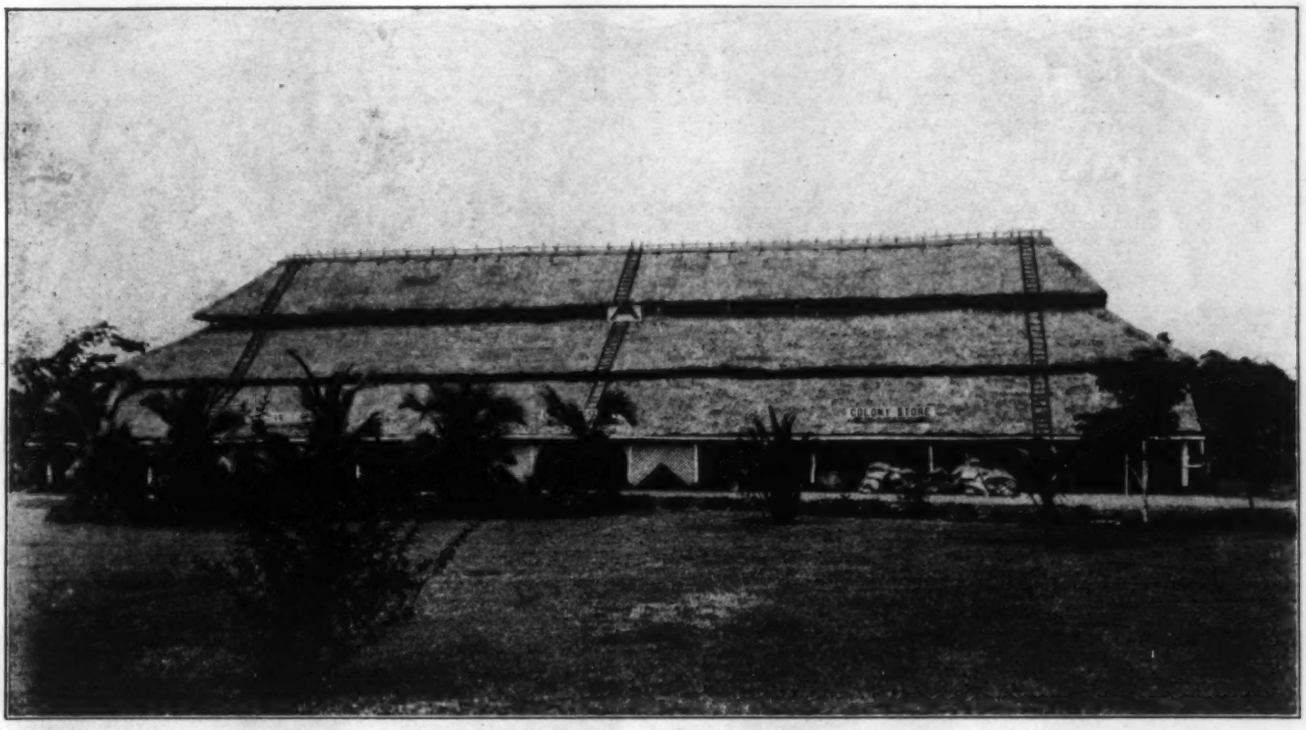
The Colonists' Engineering Skill

A FEW minutes later we entered the narrow winding stream, flanked on either side by lush tropical vegetation. The noise of the engine scattered the white and flame-colored parrots from the trees and sent the chattering young monkeys inland for safety. About one hundred yards ahead I saw what appeared to be several brown logs cast up on the river bank like so much driftwood. As we approached, the "logs" dove into the muddy stream with a great splash—they were a whole family of crocodiles!

Frequently along each side of the bank appeared neat



"On Parade" at Iwahig Penal Colony. The small company of men in the center are the police, also composed of colonists



The coöperative store at Iwahig which is run by the colonists for their mutual benefit

clearings, with several orderly rows of nipa shacks. On the verandas were hanging baskets of ferns and air plants in bloom. Bougainvillæa and red hibiscus gave the front gardens a holiday appearance. Beyond were majestic coconut palms, stretching almost as far as the eye could see.

A short canal—which Mr. Victorio pointed out as one of the feats of the colonists' engineering skill—brought us to the covered slip and landing stage beneath the coöperative store which is run by the colonists for their mutual benefit.

After leaving the store and rounding a sharp bend, we approached the center of the colony with its large, wide parade ground, flanked on one side by the administration building, on another by its modern hospital, on the third by the vine-covered homes of the superintendent and other officials, and on the fourth by the dormitories and houses of the colonists.

Later on, speeding along over hard macadam roads in the side car of Mr. Victorio's motor cycle, I saw various divisions of the colonists at work. Some were cutting virgin timber in the high lands of the hills, others were preparing new ground for rice plantings, others were engaged in forming sluiceways from the river to be used in irrigating the fields.

I passed through a small sugar central, where the precious grains were being extracted from the molten golden liquid of the cane.

Activities of the Colonists

PEAR, plum, and fig trees were in bloom in the orchards, and at a little distance were long groves of orange trees also in blossom. Beyond the orange groves were broad, fertile pasture lands where choice Indian cattle grazed contentedly. Other pastures contained caribao by the hundreds. The caribao is otherwise known as the water buffalo and is the beast of burden in the Philippines.

No matter where we went all the men were busy, singing and laughing at their work, and yet as we approached they stopped for a moment to render us the courtesy of a brisk military salute, and as soon as it was returned continued their tasks.

I passed through a modern sawmill where logs were tossed about by giant machines. The little Filipino handling the band saw, ripped out commands in his native Tagalog. Needless to say every one jumped when he spoke and yet he was a colonist—like the men who obeyed his orders.

He used no waste motions, but hopped back and forth handling his series of levers with veteran experience. Ripping the giant Ipil and Camogon cants, sometimes four or five feet in diameter, demands not only knowledge, but judgment. Sometimes the logs were so big that standing on the opposite side, I could not see the Filipino's head above them, but his voice could be heard above the din.

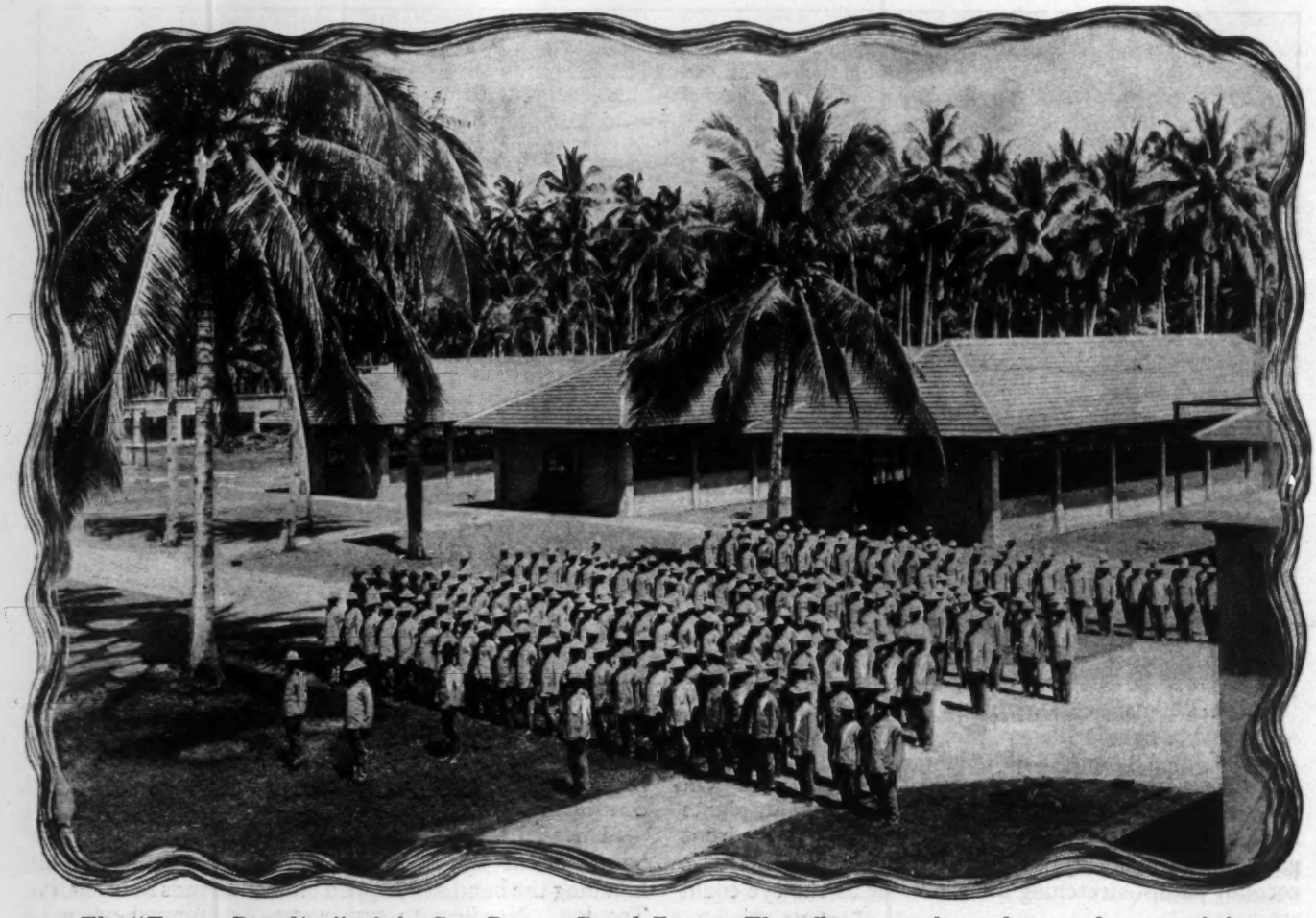
Organization of the Colony

I ASKED Mr. Victorio to take me to the prison itself. He looked at me in surprise.

"We have no prison," he said. "There is the guardhouse containing four cells, which is kept for prisoners awaiting trial by the colonist's court, which is called for the sake of convenience 'The Petty Court.'" I must have shown my astonishment for he continued to explain. "It tries minor offenses, particularly those arising between the colonists themselves. It drafts and adapts its own rules of procedure which are published in orders issued by the superintendent, if he deems them wise and proper. Its method of hearing cases is similar to that observed in the regularly organized court in a free community, the superintendent acting as the court of final appeal.

"There is also a police corps, the members of which are all colonists appointed by the superintendent. This corps is held accountable for the maintenance of peace and order and the execution of punishments or penalties imposed by the Petty Court."

The colonists are divided into work squads under the immediate charge of a petty officer who is held responsible for the work allotted to them and for the observance of discipline by members of his squad. Several squads



The "Trusty Battalion" of the San Ramon Penal Farm. The officers are chosen by popular vote of the prisoners themselves

form a division, which is put in charge of a division chief, usually an employee. However, there are certain instances where petty officers are chosen as chiefs of divisions.

The colonists are also divided into two great groups of workers. Those of the first group are called "settlers" and work for themselves. The settler is allotted a farm; he raises enough for his own use and out of the remainder reimburses the government for his maintenance and any expenses incurred for machinery and tools. Upon his release from the colony he receives the surplus moneys due him after the settlement of his obligations to the colony.

A number of the settlers have their families in the colony and are living in separate houses in barrios or districts, each of which is under the charge of a lieutenant who is elected from among themselves by plurality vote. A colonist must pass through a long probationary period and progress through two classes before he is given a plot of land to cultivate on his own account.

Colonists' Work for the Government

THE second great group is composed of colonists who work for the government, and are engaged in the following activities: dairying, the raising of poultry and meat for the colonist's subsistence; tile and brick manufacture; the erection of buildings; the production of house furniture; the maintenance of the cold storage, electric light and power plant; road and bridge construction; the operation and maintenance of water transportation; the growing of sugar cane, tobacco, fruit and coconuts; and the maintenance of a very efficient telephone system which connects all the outlying barrios with the Administration Buildings.

Every evening at Retreat, Superintendent Victorio reviews the entire colony, with the exception of those located at the far-distant hill and river stations. The subordinates in charge of these stations telephone in their reports each evening. Twice a month a complete personal check is made of each colonist by the superintendent.

Only three times during the history of Iwahig have any of the colonists attempted to escape and in every instance the offenders have been apprehended by the local Constabulary at Puerto Princessa, aided by the loyal colonists, and have been summarily returned to solitary confinement at Bilibid.

Result of the Sympathetic Treatment of Prisoners in the Philippine Prisons

WHAT becomes of the prisoner after he leaves Bilibid, San Ramon, or Iwahig is a question that may very naturally occur to the reader.

He returns to society, a sane, normal, self-respecting citizen, sure of his ability to earn an honest livelihood. When applying for employment, he proudly exhibits his prison discharge certificate as his best recommendation and as guarantee of his reformation and present fitness to take a place in his community previously denied him by his former habits of thought and consequent misdeeds.

Under the sympathetic guidance of American hands, the Philippines have "proceeded far along the path of progress."

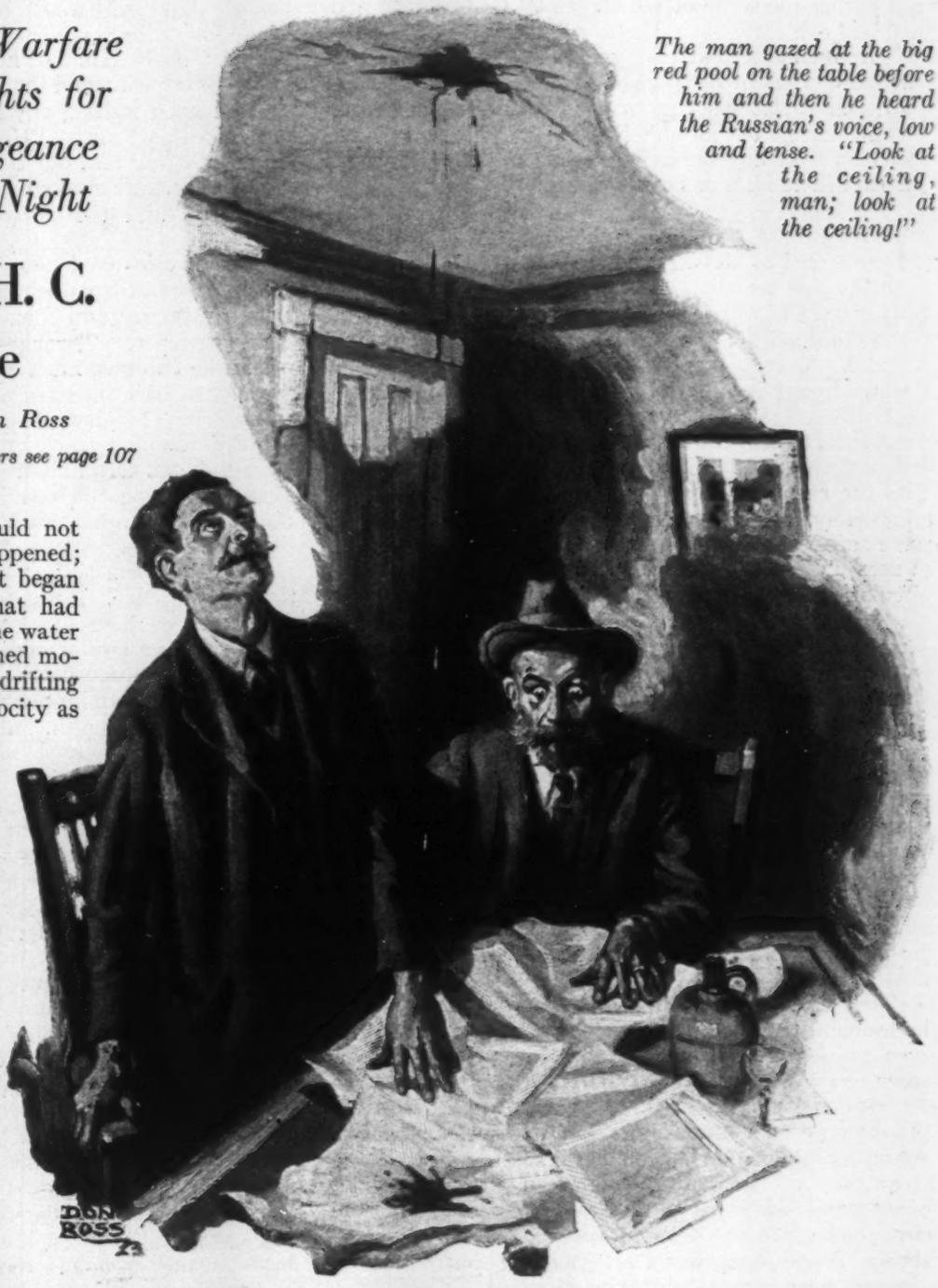
The Black Gang

With Guerrilla Warfare Drummond Fights for Love and Vengeance Through the Night

By Major H. C. McNeile

Illustrations by Don Ross

For synopsis of preceding chapters see page 107



The man gazed at the big red pool on the table before him and then he heard the Russian's voice, low and tense. "Look at the ceiling, man; look at the ceiling!"

AT first Drummond could not realize what had happened; then little by little it began to dawn on him what had occurred. Up to that time the water in which he floated had seemed motionless to him; he had been drifting in it at exactly the same velocity as the current. And now, suddenly, he saw that the water was going past him!

For an instant he failed to understand the significance of the fact; then wild hope surged up in his mind. He stared fixedly at the bridge, and gradually the hope became a certainty. He was not drifting any farther from it; he was stationary; he was aground. He could feel nothing; he could see nothing—but the one stupendous fact remained that he was aground. Life took on another lease—anything might happen now. If only he could remain there till the morning they would see him from the bridge—and there seemed no reason why he should not. The water still flowed sluggishly past him, broken with the faintest ripple close to his head. So he reasoned that it must be very shallow where he was, and, being an incurable optimist, he pictured again, with even fuller details, his next meeting with Peterson.

But not for long. Starting from his waist and spreading downward to his feet and outward through his shoulders to his hands there slowly began to creep the most agonizing cramp. The torture was indescribable, and the sweat dripped from his forehead into his eyes. Gradually it dawned on him that the effects of the poison were wearing off.

Sensation was returning to his limbs, to his body; even through his agony he could feel that he was resting against something under the water. Then he heard a strange noise, and realized that it was he himself groaning with pain. The use of his voice had come back. He spoke a sentence aloud, to make certain.

And then Drummond deliberately decided to do one of those things which Peterson had always failed to legislate for in the past. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have shouted themselves hoarse under such circumstances; but not Drummond.

He stayed where he was, in silence—and gradually the cramp passed away. He could turn his head now, and, with eyes that had grown accustomed to the darkness, he saw what had happened. On each side of him the river flowed past smoothly, and he realized that by a wonderful stroke of luck he had struck a small shoal. Had he

missed it—had he floated by on either side—well, Peterson's plan would have succeeded.

"Following the extraordinary motor accident reported in our previous issue, we are now informed that the body of the unfortunate driver has been discovered some three miles from the scene of the tragedy. He was drowned, and had evidently been dead some hours."

Drummond smiled grimly to himself as he imagined the paragraphs in the papers. His nerves were far too hardened to let his narrow escape worry him for an instant, and he felt an unholy satisfaction in thinking of Peterson searching the early specials and the late extras for that little item of news.

"I'D hate you to be disappointed, my friend," he muttered to himself, "but you'll have to be content with the coat and hat. The body has doubtless drifted farther on, and will be recovered later."

He took off his hat, and let it drift away; he unbuttoned his overcoat and sent it after the hat. Then, letting himself down into the deep water, he swam noiselessly toward the bank.

A little to his surprise he found that his legs and arms felt perfectly normal—a trifle stiff, perhaps, but beyond that the effects of the poison seemed to have worn off completely. Beyond being very wet, he appeared to have suffered no evil results at all, and after he'd done "knees up" on the bank for five minutes to restore his circulation he sat down to consider his plan of action.

First, Phyllis at Maybrick Hall. He must get at her somehow, and, even if he couldn't get her away, he must let her know that she would be all right. After that things must look after themselves; everything would depend on circumstances. Always provided that those circumstances led to the one great goal—Peterson. Once Phyllis was safe, everything was subservient to that.

A church clock near by began to toll the hour, and Drummond counted the strokes. Eleven o'clock—not two hours since he had gone over the bridge—and it felt like six. So much the better; it gave him so many more hours of darkness, and he wanted darkness for his explorations at Maybrick Hall. And it suddenly dawned on him that he hadn't the faintest idea where the house was.

That might have deterred some men; it merely made Drummond laugh. If he didn't know, he'd find out—even if it became necessary to pull some one out of bed in order to ask where it was. The first thing to do was to get back to the spot where the car had halted, and to do that he must go across country. Activity was diminishing on the bridge, but he could still see lanterns dancing about, and the sudden appearance of a very wet man might lead to awkward questions. So he struck off in the direction he judged to be right—moving with that strange, catlike silence which was a never-ending source of wonderment even to those who knew him best.

NO man ever heard Drummond coming, and very few ever saw him until it was too late, if he didn't intend that they should. And now, in utterly unknown country, with he knew not how many undesirable gentlemen about, he was taking no risks. Mercifully for him, it was a dark night—just such a night, in fact, as he would have chosen, and as he passed like a huge shadow from tree to tree, only to vanish silently behind a hedge and reappear two hundred yards farther on, he began to feel that life was good.

The joy of action was in his veins; soon he was going to get his hands on somebody, preferably the Italian or the man who called himself Franz. For Bill he had a sneaking regard; Bill, at any rate, could appreciate a good car when he saw one. The only trouble was that he was unarmed, and an unarmed man can't afford to stop and admire the view in a mix-up. Not that the point deterred him for a moment, it only made him doubly cautious. He must see without being seen; he must act without being heard. Afterward would be a different matter.

Suddenly he stiffened and crouched motionless behind a bush. He had heard voices and the sound of footsteps crunching on the gravel.

"No good waiting any more," said a man whom he recognized as Franz. "He's dead for a certainty, and they can't pull him out till to-morrow. Couldn't have gone better. He swayed right over just as the car took the gates, and the bridgekeeper saw it. Think he fainted——"

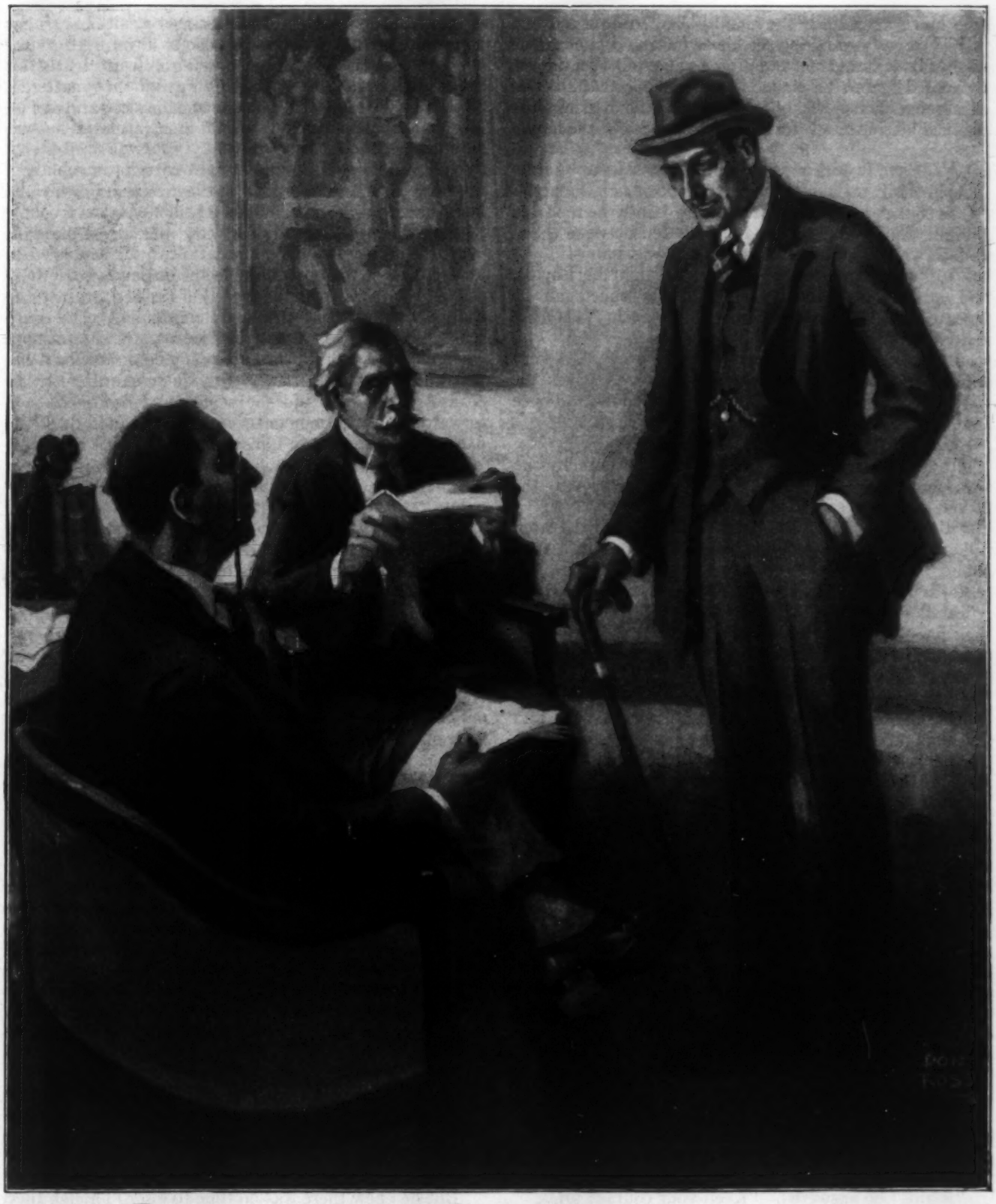
Their voices died away in the distance, and Drummond came out from behind the bush. He stepped forward cautiously and found himself confronted with a high wire fence. Through it he could see a road, along which the two men must have been walking. And then through a gap in the trees he saw a light in the window of a house. So his first difficulty was solved. In all probability, the man called Franz and his companion could have but one destination—Maybrick Hall. And that must be the house he could see through the trees, while the road on the other side of the fence was the drive leading up to it.

He gave them half a minute or so; then he climbed through the fence. It was a fence with horizontal strands of thick wire, about a foot apart, and the top strand was two feet above Drummond's head. An expensive fence, he reflected; an unusual fence to put around this sort of property. An admirable fence for cattle in a corral because of its strength, but for a house and grounds—peculiar, to say the least. It was not a thing of beauty, it afforded no concealment, and it was perfectly simple to climb through. And because Drummond had been trained in the school which notices details, even apparently trivial ones, for a moment or two he stood staring at the fence, after he had clambered through.

IT was the expense of the thing more than anything else that puzzled him. It was new—that was obvious, and, after a while, he proceeded to walk along it for a short way. When he came to the first upright, another peculiar thing struck him. It was an iron, T-shaped post, and each strand of wire passed through a hole in the bottom part of the T. A perfectly simple and sound arrangement, and just the type of upright one would have expected to find in such a fence, except for one little point: Round every hole was a small white collar, through which each strand of wire passed, so that the wires rested on the collars and not on the holes in the iron upright. Truly, a most remarkable fence, he reflected again—in fact, a thoroughly eccentric fence.

But he got no further than that in his thoughts; the knowledge which would have supplied him with the one clew necessary to account for that fence's eccentricity was not his. The facts he could notice; the reason for the facts was beyond him. And after a further examination he shrugged his shoulders and gave it up. There were bigger things ahead of him than a mere question of fencing, and, keeping in the shadow of the shrubs which fringed each side of the drive, he crept silently toward the house.

It was a low, rambling type of building covered with ivy and creepers as far as he could see. There were only two stories, and Hugh nodded his satisfaction. For a long time he stood in the shadow of a big rhododendron bush, carefully surveying every possible line of approach and flight, and it was while he was balancing up chances



"Morning, Sir John," boomed Hugh genially. "Jolly old Cabinet merry and bright? Or did you all go down on Purple Polly yesterday?"

that he gradually became aware of a peculiar noise proceeding from the house.

It sounded like the very faint hum of an airplane in the far distance, except that every two or three seconds there came a slight thud. It was quite regular, and during the four or five minutes while he stood listening there was no variation in the monotonous rhythm. Thud: thud: thud—faint, but very distinct; and all the time the gentle whirring of some smooth-running, but powerful engine accompanied it.

The house was in darkness save for one room on the ground floor, from which the light was streaming. It was empty, and appeared to be an ordinary sitting room. And, as a last resort, Hugh decided he would go in that way, if outside methods failed. But he had no intention of entering the house if it could be avoided; it struck him that the odds against him were unnecessarily large as it was.

He retreated still farther into the shadow, and then, quite clear and distinct, the hoot of an owl was heard in the silent garden. He knew that Phyllis would recognize the call if she heard it; he knew that she would

give him some sign if she could. And so he stood and waited, eagerly watching the house for any sign of movement. But none came, and after a pause of half a minute he hooted again. Of course it was possible that she was in a room facing the other way, and he had already planned his line of advance around the back of the house.

AND then, just as he was preparing to skirt around to investigate, he saw the curtains of one of the upper rooms shake and open slightly. Very faintly he repeated the call, and to his oy saw a head poked between them. But he was taking no chances, and it was impossible to tell to whom the head belonged. It might be Phyllis, and on the other hand it might not. So once again he repeated the call, barely above his breath. Then he waited for some answer.

It came almost at once—his own name called very gently, and he hesitated no more. He was across the lawn in a flash and standing under her window, and once again he heard her voice, tense with anxiety.

"Is that you, Hugh?"

"Yes, darling," he whispered back. "But there's no time to talk now. I want you to jump down to the flower bed. It's soft landing, and it won't hurt you."

"But I can't, old man," she said, with a little catch in her breath. "They've got me lashed up with a steel chain."

"They've got you lashed up with a steel chain," Hugh repeated stupidly. "The devil they have—the devil they have!" His voice was shaking a little with cold, concentrated fury. "All right, dear," he went on after a moment, "if you can't come to me, I must come to you. We'll soon deal with that chain."

He glanced into the room underneath hers and saw that it looked like a drawing-room. The windows seemed easy to force if necessary, but he decided first of all to try the ivy outside. Just at the bottom it supported him, but as soon as he started to climb it gave way at once. Twice he got up about six feet, twice he fell back again as the ivy broke away from the wall. And after the second attempt he looked up at the anxious face of his wife.

"No go, darling," he muttered. "And I'm afraid of making too much noise. I'm going to try to force this window."

By a stroke of luck they had not taken his clasp knife, and by a still greater stroke of luck he found that the catch on the window had been broken, and that it proved even easier to open than he had thought it would. He stepped back and looked up.

"I'm coming in, Phyllis," he whispered. "Do you know where the stairs are?"

"Just about the middle of the house, old man. And listen. I can't quite reach the door to open it, but I've got my parasol and I can tap on it so that you'll know which it is."

"Right," he answered. "Keep your courage up."

THE next moment he had vanished into the drawing-room. And now he noticed that the strange noise which he had heard while standing on the lawn was much louder. As he cautiously opened the door and peered into the passage the very faint hum became a steady drone, and the floorboards shook a little with each successive thud.

The passage was in darkness, though light was shining from under some of the doors. And as he crept along in search of the stairs he heard voices proceeding from one of the rooms which he passed. Evidently a fairly populous household, he thought, as he tested the bottom stair with his weight to see if it creaked. But the staircase was old and solid, and the stair carpet was thick, and at the moment Hugh was not disposed to linger. Afterward the house seemed to promise a fairly fruitful field for investigation; at present Phyllis was all that mattered. So he vanished upward with the uncanny certainty of all his movements at night, and a moment later he was standing on the landing above.

Before him was a long, straight corridor, a replica of the one below, and he turned in the direction in which he knew her room must lie. But he had only taken a couple of steps when he stopped abruptly, peering ahead with eyes that strove to pierce the darkness, for it seemed to him that there was something in the passage—something darker than its surroundings. He pressed against the wall and stood there absolutely motionless, with every sense alert, his arms hanging loosely, ready for any emergency. Then he heard a tapping on one of the doors just ahead of him. It was Phyllis signaling with her parasol as she had said she would, and he took a step forward. At that moment something sprang out of the darkness, and he found himself fighting for his life.

For a second or two he was at a disadvantage, so completely had he been taken by surprise; then the old habits returned—not a moment too soon. He was up against an antagonist who was worthy of him. Two hands, like iron hooks, were around his neck, and the man who gets that grip first wins more often than not. His own hands shot out into the darkness, and then for the first time in his life he felt a stab of fear. For he couldn't reach the other man! Long though his arms were, the other man's were far longer, and as his hands went along them he could feel the muscles standing out like steel bars. He made one supreme effort to force through to his opponent's throat, and it failed; with his superior reach he could keep his distance.

ALREADY Drummond's head was beginning to throb with the awful pressure around his throat; he knew he must do something at once or lose. And just in time he remembered his clasp knife. It went against his grain to use it; never before had he fought an unarmed man with a weapon—and as far as he could tell this man was unarmed. But it had to be done, and done quickly.

With all his force he stabbed sideways at the man's left arm. He heard a snarl of pain, and the grip of one of the hands around his throat relaxed. And now the one urgent thing was to prevent him from shouting for help. Like a flash Drummond was on him, one hand on his mouth and the other gripping his throat with the grip he had learned from Osaki, the Jap, in days gone by, and had never forgotten. And because he was fighting to kill now, he wasted no time. The grip tightened; there was a dreadful worrying noise as the man bit into his thumb—then it was over. The man slipped downward upon the floor, and Drummond stood drawing in great mouthfuls of air.

But he knew there was no time to lose. Though they had fought in silence, and he could still hear the monotonous thud and the beat of the engine, at any moment some one might come upstairs. And to be found with a dead man at one's feet in a strange house is not the best way to secure a welcome. What to do with the body—that was the first insistent point. There was no time for intricate schemes; it was a question of taking risks and chancing it. So, for a moment or two he listened at the door of the room opposite that on which he had heard Phyllis tapping, and from which the man had sprung at him—then he gently opened it. It was a bedroom and empty, and without further hesitation he dragged his late opponent in, and left him lying on the floor.

By the dim light from the uncurtained window, he

could see that the man was almost deformed, so enormous was the length of his arms. They must have been six inches longer than those of an average man, and were almost as powerful as his own. And as he saw the snarling, ferocious face upturned to his, he uttered a little prayer of thanksgiving for the presence of his clasp knife. It had been altogether too near a thing for his liking.

He closed the door and stepped across the passage, and the next moment Phyllis was in his arms.

"I thought you were never coming, old man," she whispered. "I was afraid the brutes had caught you."

"I had a slight difference of opinion with a warrior outside your door," said Hugh, grinning. "Quite like old times."

"But, my dear," she said, with sudden anxiety in her voice, "you're sopping wet!"

"Much water has flowed under the bridge, my angel child, since I last saw you—and I've flowed with it." He kissed her on the right side of her mouth, then on the left for symmetry, and finally in the middle for luck. Then he grew serious. "No time for hot air now, old thing; let's have a look at this jolly old chain effect of yours. Once we're out of here, you shall tell me everything and I'll eat several pounds of mud for having been such an unmitigated idiot as to let these swine get hold of you."

He was examining the steel chain as he spoke, and gradually his face grew grave. He didn't seem to have gained much, after all, by breaking in; Phyllis was just as much a prisoner as ever. The chain, which was about six feet long, was fastened at one end to a big staple in the wall and at the other to a bracelet which encircled his wife's right wrist. And the bracelet could only be opened with a key. Any idea of breaking the chain or pulling out the staple was so preposterous as not to be worth even a moment's thought; so everything depended on the bracelet. And when he came to examine it more carefully he found that it had a Yale lock.

He sat down on the edge of the bed, and she watched him anxiously.

"Can't you get it undone, boy?" she whispered.

"Not if I stopped here till next Christmas, darling," he answered heavily.

"Well, get out of the window and go for the police," she implored.

"My dear," he said still more heavily, "I had, as I told you, a little difference of opinion with the gentleman outside the door—and he's dead." Phyllis caught her breath sharply. "He was a nasty man with long arms and he attacked me. It might be all right, of course—but I somehow feel that this matter is beyond the local constable, even if I could find him. You see, I don't even know where we are." He checked the exclamation of surprise that rose to her lips. "I'll explain afterward, darling; let's think of this now. If only I could get the key—if only I knew where it was, even!"

"A foreigner came in about an hour ago," answered his wife. "He had it then. And he said he'd come again to-night."

"He did, did he?" said Hugh slowly. "I wonder if it's my friend, the Italian. Anyway, dear, it's the only chance. Did he come alone last time?"

"Yes: I'm sure no one was with him."

"Then we must chance it," said Hugh. "Say something; get him into the room, and then leave him to me. And if for any reason he doesn't come, I'll have to leave you here and raise the gang."

"Wouldn't it be safer, boy, to do that now?" she said imploringly. "Suppose anything happened to you."

"Anything further that happens to me tonight, old thing," he remarked grimly, "will be as flat as a squashed pancake compared to what's happened already."

And then, because she saw his mind was made up and she knew the futility of arguing under those conditions, she sat on the bed beside him to wait. For a while they sat in silence, listening to the monotonous thudding noise which went ceaselessly on; then, because he wanted to distract her mind, he made her tell him what had happened to her. And in disjointed whispers, with his arm around her waist, she pieced together the gaps in the story. How the man had come about the electric light and then had offered to fetch her a taxi, he knew already from Denny.

She had got in, never suspecting anything, and told him to drive to the Ritz—and almost at once she had begun to feel faint. Still she suspected nothing, until she tried to open one of the windows. But it wouldn't open, and the last thing she remembered before she actually fainted was tapping on the glass to try to draw the driver's attention. Then, when she came to, she found to

The Story from the Beginning

THE Black Gang, whose mission it is to strike terror to the heart of the Bolshevists in England, led by Bulldog Drummond—though that fact is a secret to all save members of the Gang—maintain a retreat for the agitators whom they succeed in capturing. Drummond, not content with kidnapping the lesser fry, finally penetrates into the office of Count Zadowa, one of the leaders, only to have a bomb thrown at him by that irate man.

Drummond manages to escape, carrying with him a small bag which contains six priceless diamonds, once the property of a Grand Duke of Russia. These gems were stolen by Drummond's old-time enemy—Carl Peterson, now the guiding spirit of the Bolshevik organization. Peterson, disguised as a clergyman, has come to London with his so-called daughter Janet for the purpose of destroying the Black Gang. He learns that Drummond is the leader of the Gang, and, through a stroke of luck, kidnaps Drummond's wife, Phyllis. In order to save Phyllis, Drummond agrees to give up the diamonds. But when he comes to Peterson's room in the hotel with the jewels, he is drugged with a subtle poison which renders him incapable of speech or movement, though his mind is clear. In that condition, according to Peterson's orders, he is taken away in a motor car and sent at full speed over an open drawbridge.

The car sinks to the bottom of the river, but Drummond, in a last supreme struggle for his life, kicks clear of the car and rises slowly to the surface of the water. His coat holds him up for a moment, but he realizes that it is just a question of time before—the end!

her horror that she was not alone. A man was in the car with her, and they were out of London in the country. Both windows were wide open, she noticed, and she asked him furiously what he was doing in her car. He smiled, and remarked that so far he was not aware he had sold it, but he was always open to an offer. And it was then that she realized for the first time exactly what had happened.

The man told her quite frankly that she hadn't fainted at all, but had been rendered unconscious by a discharge of gas down the speaking tube; that, acting under orders, he was taking her to a house in the country where she would have to remain—for how long he was unable to say—and, further, if she made a sound or gave any trouble he would gag her on the spot.

Hugh's arm tightened around her waist, and he cursed fluently under his breath.

"And what happened when you got here, darling?" he asked, as she paused.

"They brought me straight up here, and tied me up," she answered. "They haven't hurt me—and they've given me food, but I've been terrified—simply terrified—as to what they were going to do next." She clung to him, and he kissed her reassuringly. "There's a man with red hair and a straggling beard, who came and stared at me in the most horrible way. He was in his shirt sleeves and his arms were all covered with chemical stains."

"Did he touch you?" asked Hugh grimly.

"No—he just looked horrible," she said, with a shudder. "And then he repeated the other man's threat—the one who had been in the car—that if I shouted or made any fuss he'd lash me up and gag me. He spoke in a sort of broken English—and his voice never seemed to rise above a whisper."

She was trembling now, and Hugh made a mental note of another gentleman on whom he proposed to lay hands in the near future. Red hair and a straggling beard should not prove hard to recognize.

HE glanced at the watch on Phyllis' wrist, and saw that it was very nearly one o'clock. The noise of the engine was still going monotonously on; except for that the house seemed absolutely silent. And he began to wonder how long it would be wise to continue the vigil.

Supposing no one did come; supposing somebody came who didn't have the key; supposing two or three of them came at the same time! Would it be better, even now, to drop through the window—and try to find a telephone or the police? If only he knew where he was! It might take him hours to find either at that time of night. And his whole being revolted at the idea of leaving Phyllis absolutely defenseless in such a house.

He rose and paced softly up and down the room, trying to think what was the best thing to do. It was a maddening circle whichever way he looked at it, and his fists clenched and unclenched as he tried to make up his mind whether to go or to wait. Would it be better to go at once or to wait in the hope that one man would come up and have the key on him? Common sense suggested the first course; something far more powerful than common sense prompted the latter. He could not and *would* not leave Phyllis alone. And so he decided on a compromise. If by the time daylight came no one had been up to the room, he would go; but he would wait until then. She'd feel safer once the night was over, and in the dawn he would be able to find his way outside more easily.

He was just going to tell Phyllis what he had decided, when he heard a sound that killed the words on his lips. A door had opened below, and men's voices came floating up the stairs.

"Lie down, darling," he breathed in her ear, "and pretend to be asleep."

Without a word she did as he told her, while Hugh tiptoed over toward the door. Steps were coming up the stairs, and he flattened himself against the wall—waiting. The period of indecision was ended; unless he was very much mistaken the time for action had arrived. How it would pan out—whether luck would be in, or whether luck would fail was on the lap of the gods. All he could do was to hit hard and, if necessary, hit often, and a tingle of pure joy spread over him. Even Phyllis was almost forgotten at the moment; he had room in his mind for one thought only—the man whose steps he could hear coming along the passage.

There was only one of them, he noted with a sigh of relief—but, for all that, silence would be essential. It would take time to find the key; it would take even longer to free Phyllis and get her out of the house. So there must be no risk of an alarm, whatever happened.

THE steps paused outside the door, and he heard a muttered ejaculation in Italian. It was his own particular friend of the motor right enough, and he grinned gently to himself. Apparently he was concerned over something, and it suddenly dawned on Drummond that it was the absence from duty of the long-armed bird that was causing the surprise. In the excitement of the moment he had forgotten all about him, and for one awful second his heart stood still. If the Italian discovered the body before he entered the room, then the game was up with a vengeance. Once the alarm was given, he'd have to run the gauntlet of the whole crowd over ground he didn't know.

But his fears were groundless; the non-discovery of the watcher by the door took the Italian the other way. His first thought was to make sure that the girl was safe, and he flung open the door and came in. He gave a grunt of satisfaction as he saw her lying on the bed; then he swung around like a spitting cat as he felt Drummond's hand on his shouder.

"*È pericoloso sporgersi,*" muttered Hugh pleasantly, recalling the only Italian words he knew.

"*Dio mio!*" stammered the other, with trembling lips. Like most southerners he was superstitious, and to be told that it was dangerous to lean out of the window by a man whom he knew to be drowned was too much for him. It was a ghost; it could be nothing else, and his knees suddenly felt strangely weak.

"You didn't know I was a linguist, did you?" continued Hugh, still more pleasantly; and with every ounce of weight in his body behind the blow, he hit the Italian on the point of the jaw. Without a sound the man crumpled up and pitched on his face.

And now there was not a moment to be lost. At any moment one of the fellows might come upstairs, and everything depended on speed and finding the key. Hugh shut the door and locked it; then feverishly he started to search through the Italian's pockets. Up to date everything had panned out so wonderfully that he refused to believe that luck was going to fail him now, and sure enough he discovered the bunch in one of the unconscious man's waistcoat pockets. There were four of them, and the second he tried was the right one. Phyllis was free, and he heard her give a little sob of pure excitement.

"YOU perfectly wonderful boy!" she whispered, and Hugh grinned.

"We'll hurl floral decorations afterward, my angel," he remarked. "Just at the moment it seems a pity not to replace you with some one."

He heaved the Italian upon the bed, and snapped the steel bracelet on his arm. Then he slipped the keys into

his own pocket, and crossed to the window. The engine was still humming gently; the thudding noise was still apparent, nothing seemed in any way different. No light came from the room below them; everything had worked better than he had dared to hope. He had only to lower Phyllis out of the window, let her drop to the flower bed, and then follow himself. After that it was easy.

"Come along, darling," he said urgently, "I'm going to lower you first—then I'll follow. And once you're down, you've got to run like a stag across the lawn till you're under cover of those bushes. We aren't quite out of the wood yet."

THEY were not indeed. It was just as Phyllis let go, and he saw her pick herself up and dart across the lawn, that he heard a terrific uproar in the house below, and several men came pounding up the stairs. There were excited voices in the passage outside, and for a moment he hesitated, wondering what on earth had caused the sudden alarm. Then realizing that this was no time for guessing acrostics, he vaulted over the window sill, and lowered himself to the full extent of his arms. Then, he, too, let go and dropped down to the flower bed below. And it was just as he was picking himself up, preparatory to following Phyllis—whom he could see faintly across the lawn waiting for him—that he heard some one in the house shout an order in a hoarse voice.

"Switch on the power at once, you fool! Switch it on at once!"

Chapter 16

HAD the Italian come up five minutes sooner—a minute even—all would have been well. As it was, at the very moment when Drummond's crashing blow took him on the point of the jaw, something fell from a ce ling upon a table in the room below that ceiling.

The two men seated in the room below the ceiling in question failed to notice it at first, being engrossed in their conversation. One was the red-headed man of whom Phyllis had spoken: the other was a nondescript type of individual who looked like an ordinary middle-class professional man.

"Our organization has, of course, grown immensely," he was saying. "Our Socialist Sunday Schools, as you may know, were started twenty-five years ago. A very small beginning, my friend, but the result now would stagger you. And wishy-washy stuff was taught to start with, too; now I think even you would be satisfied."

Something splashed on the table beside him, but he took no notice.

"Blasphemy, of course—or rather what the bourgeois call blasphemy—is instilled at once. We teach them to fear no God; we drive into them each week that the so-called God is merely a weapon of the capitalist class to keep them quiet, and that if it had not that effect they would see what a machine gun could do. And, Yulowski it is having its effect. Get at the children has always been my motto—for they are the next generation. They can be molded like plastic clay; their parents, so often, are set in a groove. We preach class hatred—and nothing but class hatred. We give them songs to sing—songs with a real catchy tune. There's one very good one in which the chorus goes:

> "'Come, workers, sing a rebel song, a song of love and hate,
> Of love unto the lowly and of hatred to the great.'"

He paused to let the full effect of the sublime stanza sink in, and again something splashed on the table.

Yulowski nodded his head indifferently.

"I admit its value, my friend," he remarked in a curious, husky whisper. "And in your country I suppose you must go slowly. I fear my inclinations lead toward something more rapid and—er—drastic. Sooner or later the bourgeois must be exterminated all the world over. On that we are agreed. Why not make it sooner, as we did in Russia? The best treatment for any of the capitalist class is a bayonet in the stomach and a rifle butt on the head."

He smiled reminiscently, a thin, cruel smile, and once again there came an unheeded splash.

"I have heard it said," remarked the other man, with the faintest hesitation, "that you yourself were responsible in Russia for a good many of them."

The smile grew more pronounced and cruel.

"It was I, my friend, who battered out the brains of two members of the Arch Tyrant's family. Yes, I—I who sit here." His voice rose to a sort of throaty shout and his eyes gleamed. "You can guess who I mean, can't you?"

"TWO girls!" muttered the other, recoiling a little in spite of himself.

"Two——" The foul epithet went unuttered; Yulowski was staring fascinated at the table. "Holy Mother! What's that?"

His companion swung round, and every vestige of color left his face. On the table was a big red pool, and even as he watched it there came another splash and a big drop fell into it.

"Blood!" he stammered, and his lips were shaking. "It's blood." And then he heard the Russian's voice, low and tense.

"Look at the ceiling, man; look at the ceiling!"

He stared upward and gave a little cry of horror. Slowly spreading over the white plaster was a great crimson stain, while from a crack in the middle the steady drip fell upon the table.

It was Yulowski who recovered himself first.

"There's been murder done!" he shouted hoarsely, and dashed out of the room. Doors were flung open, and a half dozen men rushed up the stairs after him. There was no doubt which room it was, and, headed by Yulowski, they crowded in—only to stop and stare at what lay on the floor.

"It's the Greek," muttered one of them. "He was guarding the girl. And some one has severed the main artery in his arm."

With one accord they dashed across the passage to the room where Phyllis had been. In a second the door was broken in, and they saw the unconscious Italian lying on the bed.

"The Black Gang," muttered some one fearfully, and Yulowski cursed him for a cowardly swine. And it was the Russian's hoarse voice that Drummond heard shouting for the power to be switched on, as he turned and darted across the lawn.

Completely ignorant of what had taken place, he was just as ignorant of what was meant by switching on the power. His one thought now was to get away with Phyllis. A start meant everything, and at the best he couldn't hope for a long one. With his arm through hers he urged her forward, while behind him he heard a confused shouting which gradually died away under the peremptory orders of some one who seemed to be in command. And almost subconsciously he noticed that the thudding noise had ceased—only the faint humming of the engine broke the silence.

Suddenly in front of him he saw the fence which had caused him to wonder earlier in the evening. It was just

the same in this part as it had been in the other, but he wasn't concerned with speculations about it now. The only thing he was thankful for was that it was easy to get through.

He was not five feet from it, when it happened—the amazing and at the moment inexplicable thing. For months after he used to wake in the night and lie sweating with horror at the nearness of the escape. For it would have been Phyllis who would have gone through first; it would have been Phyllis, who—— But it did happen—just in time.

HE saw a dark shape dart across the open toward the fence, an animal carrying something in its mouth. It reached the fence, and the next instant it bounded an incredible height in the air, only to fall backward to the ground and lie motionless, almost at Drummond's feet. It was so utterly unexpected that he paused instinctively and stared at it.

It was a fox, and the fowl it had been carrying lay a yard away. It lay there rigid and motionless, and, completely bewildered, Hugh bent and touched it, only to draw back his hand as if he'd been stung. A sharp, stabbing pain shot up his arm, as if he'd had an electric shock—and suddenly he understood, and with a cry of fear he dragged Phyllis back just in time.

The brain moves rapidly at times; the inherent connection of things takes place in a flash. And the words he had used to the Italian "*È pericoloso sporgersi,*" took him back to Switzerland, where the phrase is written on every railway carriage. And, in Switzerland, you may see those heavy steel pylons with curved, pointed hooks to prevent people climbing up, and red bands painted with the words *Danger de mort.* Live wires there are at the top, carried on insulators—even as the fence wires were carried through insulators in the uprights.

Danger de mort! And the fox had been electrocuted. That was what the man had meant by shouting for the power to be switched on. And as Hugh stood there, still clutching Phyllis' arm, shaken for the moment out of his usual calm, there came from the direction of the house, the deep-throated baying of a big hound.

"What is it, Hugh?" said Phyllis in an agonized whisper.

With terrified eyes, she was staring at the body of the fox, stiff and rigid in death, its jaws parted in a hideous snarl. And again there came from the direction of the house a deep-throated bay.

Then suddenly she realized that her husband was speaking—quietly, insistently. Only too well did he know the danger: only too well did he know that never before in his life had the situation been so tight. But no sign of it showed on his face: not a trace of indecision appeared in his voice. The position was desperate; the remedy must be desperate, too.

"We can't climb through the fence, dear," he was saying calmly. "You see, they've switched an electric current through the wires, and if you touch one you'll be electrocuted. Also, they seem to have turned an unpleasant little animal into the garden, so we can't stay here. At least—you can't. So I'm going to throw you over the fence."

In an agony of fear she clung to him for a moment: then, as she saw his quiet, set face she pulled herself together, and smiled. There was no time for argument now: there was no time for anything except instant action. And, being a thoroughbred, she was not going to hinder him by any weakness on her part. Of fear for herself she felt no trace: her faith and trust in her husband were absolute. And so she stood there silently waiting, while he measured height and distance with his eye.

Of his ability to get her over he felt no doubt: but when a mistake means death to the woman he loves a man does not take risks.

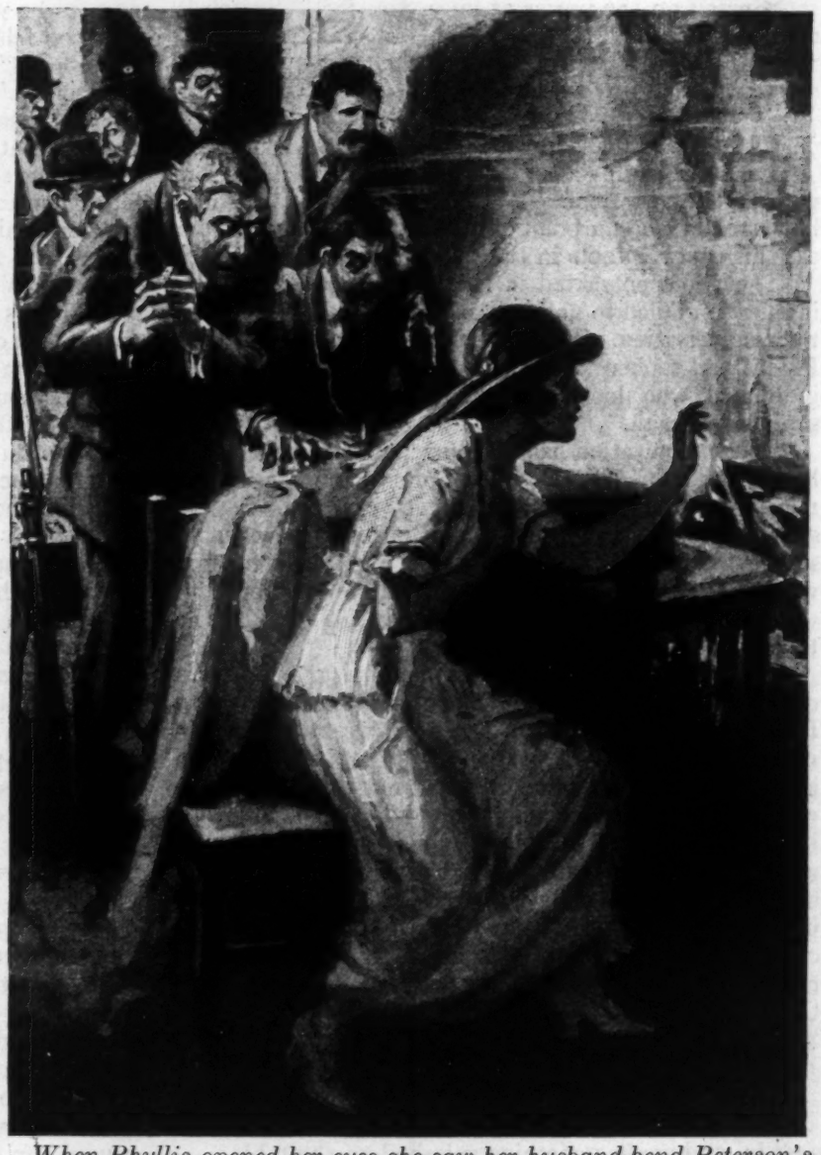
"Come, dear," he said, after a moment's pause. "Put your knees close up to your chin, and try to keep like a ball until you feel yourself falling."

She doubled herself up and he picked her up. One hand held both her feet—the other gripped the waistband at the back of her skirt. Once he lifted her above his head to the full extent of his arms to free his muscles: then he took a little run and threw her up and forward with all his strength. And she cleared the top strand by two feet——

SHE landed, unhurt, in some bushes, and when she had scrambled to her feet she realized that Hugh were speaking again—imperatively, urgently.

"Get the gang, darling: somehow or other, get the gang. I'll try to get you a good start. But—hurry."

The next instant he had disappeared into the under-



When Phyllis opened her eyes she saw her husband bend Peterson's

growth, and only just in time. A huge hound running silently had dashed into the clearing where a second or two before they had been standing, and was cautiously approaching the dead fox. She stared at it fascinated, and then with a little cry of terror she pulled herself together and ran. She had forgotten the fence that was between them: for the moment she had forgotten everything except this huge brute that looked the size of a calf. And the hound, seeing the flutter of her dress, forgot things, too. A dead fox could wait, a living human was better fun by far. He bounded forward: gave one agonized roar as he hit the fence, and, turning a complete somersault, lay still. And, as Phyllis stumbled blindly on, she suddenly heard Hugh's cheerful voice from the darkness behind her, apparently addressing the world at large.

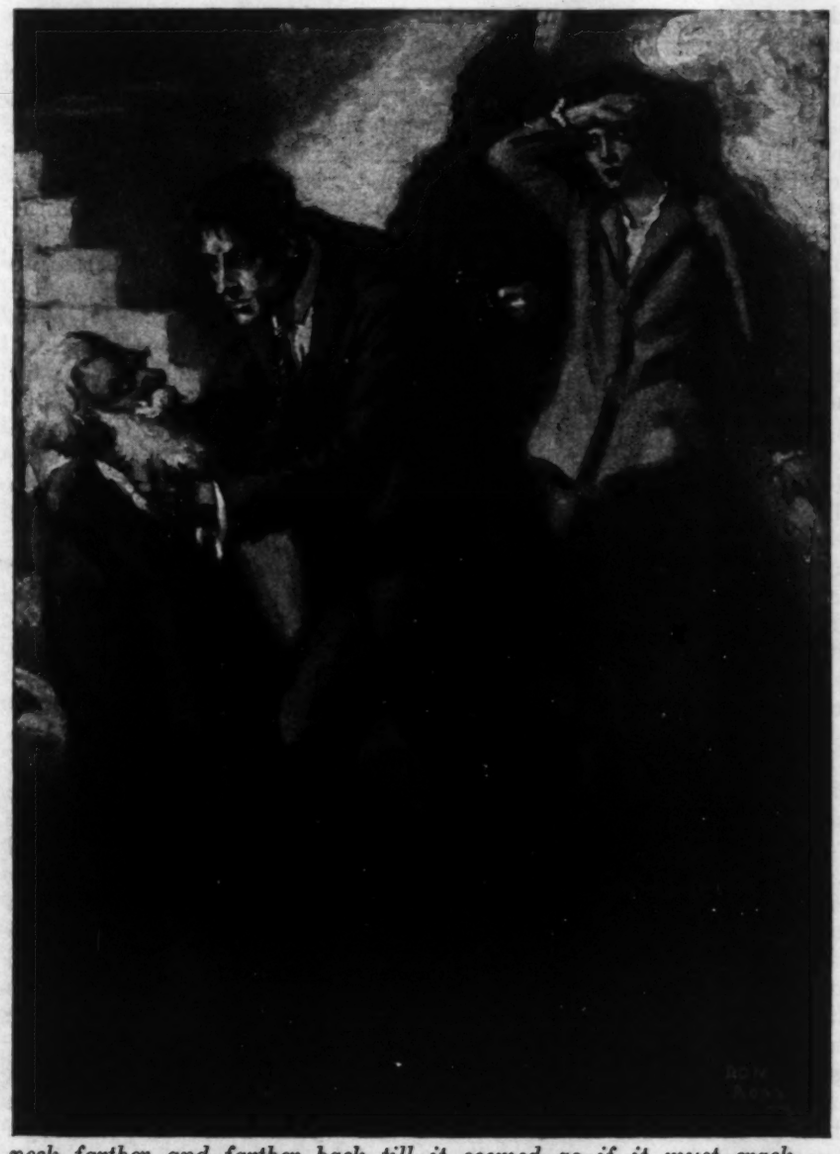
"ROLL up! Roll up! Roll up! One fox: one Pomeranian: one fowl. No charge for admittance. Visitors are requested not to touch the exhibits."

And then, loud and clear, came the hoot of an owl, thrice repeated. It was a message for her, she knew—not a senseless piece of bravado: a message to tell her that he was all right. But the call at the end was the urgent call of the gang, and, though he was safe at the moment, she knew there was no time to be lost. With a little prayer that she would choose the right direction, she broke into a steady run. Hugh had never let her down yet—it was her turn now, she kept telling herself as she ran.

To what extent it was her turn, perhaps it was as well that she did not realize. Even Drummond, hidden in the undergrowth close by the clearing where lay the body of the hound, was ignorant of the nature of the odds against him. He had not the slightest idea how many men there were in the house—and while it remained dark he didn't much care. In the dark he felt confident of dealing with any number, or at any rate of eluding them.

It was the thing of all others that his soul loved—that grim fighting at night, when a man looks like the trunk of a tree, and the trunk of a tree looks like a man. It was in that that he was unequaled—superb: and the inmates of Maybrick Hall would have been well advised to have stayed their hands till the light came. Then the position, in military parlance, could have been taken without loss. An unarmed man is helpless when he can be seen.

But since the inmates were ignorant of what they were up against, they somewhat foolishly decided on instant action. They came streaming out in a body in the track of the dead hound, and, by so doing, they played straight into the hands of the man who crouched in the shadows close by them. He listened for one moment to the babel of tongues of every nationality, and decided that a little more English might adjust the average. So without a sound he faded away from his hiding place, and emerged from the undergrowth ten yards nearer the house. Then with his collar turned up and his shoulders hunched together, he joined the group. And a man-eating tiger in their midst would have been a safer addition to the party.



neck farther and farther back till it seemed as if it must crack

Certain it is that the next quarter of an hour proved a period of such terror for the inmates of Maybrick Hall that at the end of that time they reassembled at the house and flatly refused to budge, despite the threats and curses of the red-headed Russian. For Drummond had heard the original orders—to form a line of beaters and shoot on sight—and had smiled gently to himself in the darkness. There is always an element of humor in stalking the stalkers, and when the line formed up at intervals of two or three yards the quarry was behind it. Moreover, the quarry was angry, with the cold, steady rage of a powerful man who realizes exactly what he is up against. Shoot on sight was the order, and Drummond accepted the terms.

SLOWLY the line of shadowy men moved forward through the undergrowth, and creeping behind them came the man they were out to kill. And gradually he edged nearer and nearer to the wire fence, until he was following the outside man of the line. Hugh saw him pause for a moment, peering round a bush, with his revolver ready in his hand. And then the terror started. The beater next to the victim had a fleeting vision of a huge black object springing through the darkness: a muttered curse and a gurgle—and a dreadful, strangled scream. And the outside beater was no more. He had been hurled against the live-wire fence as if he were a child—and the exhibits had been increased by one.

With a hoarse cry of fear the man who had been next to him turned and ran

toward the house, only to find himself seized from behind in an iron grip. It was Franz, and as he stared into the face of the man whom he knew to be drowned he gave a squawk like a trapped rabbit. But there was nothing ghostly about the hands around his neck, and as he felt himself being rushed toward the fence of death he began to struggle furiously. But Drummond was mad at the moment, and though Franz was a powerful man he might have saved himself the trouble. A terrific blow hit him, and with a grunt he fell back against the fence. The exhibits were increased by two, and through the darkness rang a cheerful laugh, followed by the hooting of an owl.

AND now the line was broken, and men were crashing about in all directions, shouting hoarsely. Here, there, and everywhere they heard the hooting of an owl: they formed into bunches of twos and threes, for protection; they blazed away with compressed-air revolvers at harmless rhododendron bushes, and sometimes at their own pals. And every now and then a great black figure would leap silently out of the darkness upon some straggler: there would be a bellow of fear and pain—followed by an ominous silence, which was broken a second or two later by the hooting of an owl twenty yards away.

Occasionally they saw him—a dim, fleeting shadow, and once four of them fired at him simultaneously. But luck was with him, and, though two holes were drilled in his coat, Drummond was not hit himself. His quiet laugh came suddenly from behind them, and even as they swung around, cursing, one of them collapsed, choking, with a bullet through his chest. It was the first time Hugh had used his first victim's revolver, but the target was too tempting to be let off. And at last they could stand it no longer. They had no idea how many men they were up against, and a complete panic set in.

With one accord, they rushed for the house, and a mocking peal of laughter followed them as they ran. For Drummond had gambled on that, and he had won. In the position of knowing that every man was his enemy, he had been at an advantage over the others, who were never sure who was a friend. For a while he listened to the flood of lurid blasphemy which came from the open windows of the room into which they had crowded: then he dodged along the bushes and looked in.

For a moment he was sorely tempted to fire: in fact, he went so far as to draw a bead on the red-headed Russian, who was gesticulating furiously. Then his hand dropped to his side: shooting into the brown was not his idea of the game. And at the same moment, the lights in the room were switched off; it had evidently struck some one inside that the position was a trifle insecure. The talking ceased abruptly, and with a faint grin on his face Drummond swung around and vanished into the deepest part of the undergrowth. It was necessary to do some thinking.

HE had got the start he wanted for Phyllis, which was all to the good, but he was as far as ever himself from getting out. There was still the fence to be negotiated if he was to escape, and common sense told him that there wasn't the remotest chance of the current having been switched off. And incidentally it didn't much matter whether it had been or not, since the only way of finding out for certain was to touch one of the wires—a thing he had not the faintest intention of doing.

One thing was certain: the fence must be continuous. From knowledge gained from the sparking plugs of his car, he knew that a break in the circuit was fatal. Therefore, there could be no break in the fence which encircled the house. And if that was so—how about the drive? How did the drive pass through the fence? There must be a break there, or something capable of forming a break. A motor car will not go over an eight-foot fence, and he had seen the wheel tracks of a car quite clearly on the drive earlier in the evening.

Yes—he would try the gate. It was imperative to get away, and that as soon as possible. When dawn came—and the first faint streaks were already beginning to show in the east—he realized that he would be at a hopeless disadvantage. Moreover, the absolute silence which now reigned after the turmoil and shouting of the last few minutes struck him as ominous. And Drummond was far too clever a man to underrate his opponents. The panic had been but a temporary affair—and the panic was now over.

He began to thread his way swiftly and silently in the direction of the drive. Not for a second did he relax his caution, though he felt tolerably certain that all his opponents were still inside the house. Only too well did he know that the greatest danger often lies when things seem safest. But he reached the edge of the drive without incident, and started to skirt along it away from the house. At last he saw the gate, and turned deeper into the undergrowth. He wanted to examine it at leisure, before making up his mind as to what he would do. As far as he could see from the outline he could make out against the road, it was an ordinary heavy wooden gate, such as may be seen frequently at the entrance to small country houses.

A tiny lodge lay on one side: the usual uncared-for undergrowth on the other. He could see the wire fence coming to the gatepost on each side; he could see that the strands were bunched together at the gate as telegraph wires are bunched when they pass underneath a bridge on a railway line. And it was while he was cogitating on the matter that he saw a man approaching from the other side. He came up to the gate, climbed over it with the utmost nonchalance, and turned into the little lodge. And Hugh noticed that as he climbed he was careful to avoid the second horizontal from the ground.

AT last it seemed to him that everything was clear. Contact was made through the latch; the current passed along the wires which were laid on the top of the second horizontal from the ground, and thence to the continuation of the fence on the other side. Anyway, whatever the electrical device, if this man could climb the gate in safety—so could he. There was a risk—a grave risk. It meant going out into the open; it meant exposing himself for a considerable period. But every moment he delayed the light grew better, and the risk became worse. And it was either that or waiting in the garden till daylight made his escape impossible. And still he hung back.

Men who knew Hugh Drummond well often said that he had a strange sixth sense which enabled him to anticipate danger, when to others with him everything seemed perfectly safe. Well-nigh fantastic stories were told of him by men who had accompanied him on those unofficial patrols he had carried out in No Man's Land whenever his battalion was in the line, and frequently when it wasn't. And as he stood there motionless as a statue, with only the ceaseless movement of his eyes to show his strained attention, that sixth sense of his warned him, and continued warning him insistently. There was danger: he felt it, he knew it—though where it lay he couldn't tell.

And then suddenly he again saw a man approaching from the other side—a man who climbed the gate with the utmost nonchalance and turned into the little lodge. He, too, carefully avoided the second horizontal from the

ground, but Drummond was not paying any attention to the gate now. Once again his sixth sense had saved him, for it was the same man who had climbed over the first time. And why should a man adopt such a peculiar form of amusement, unless he was deliberately acting as a decoy? He had disappeared into the lodge, only to leave it again by a back entrance—and in an instant the whole thing was clear. They had gambled on his going to the gate: they had gambled on his having a dart for it when he saw the gate was safe to climb. And he smiled grimly when he realized how nearly they had won their bet.

SUDDENLY his eyes riveted themselves on the little hedge in front of the lodge. Something had stirred there: a twig had snapped. And the smile grew more grim as he stared at the shadow. Up to date it was the gate that had occupied his attention—now he saw that the hedge was alive with men. And after a while he began to shake gently with laughter. The idea of the perspiring sportsman trotting in and out of the back door, to show off his particular line in gates, while a grim bunch of bandits lay on their stomachs in the dew, hoping for the best, appealed to his sense of humor. For the moment the fact that he was now hopelessly trapped did not trouble him: his whole soul went out to the painstaking gate-hopper. If only he would do it again—that was his one prayer. And sure enough about five minutes later he hove in sight again, stepping merrily and brightly along the road.

His nonchalance was superb: he even hummed gently to show his complete disdain for gates in general and this one in particular. And then Drummond plugged him through the leg. The man's howl of pain and Drummond's raucous bellow of laughter broke the silence simultaneously.

Not the least merry interlude in an evening devoted to fun and games, he reflected as he took cover rapidly behind a big tree. For bullets were whistling through the undergrowth in all directions, as the men who had been lying under cover of the hedge rose and let fly. And then, quite abruptly, the shooting died away, and Drummond became aware that a car was approaching. The headlights were throwing fantastic shadows through the bushes, and outlined against the glare he could see the figures of his opponents.

Now was his chance, and with the quickness of the born soldier he acted on it. If the car was to come in they must open the gate; and since nothing blinds any one so completely as the dazzle of strong headlights, he might be able to slip out unseen, just after the car had passed through. He skirted rapidly to one side out of the direct beam: then he made his way toward the lodge, keeping well out on the flank. And from a concealed position under cover of the little house he awaited developments.

THE man he had shot through the leg was unceremoniously bundled on to the grass beside the drive, while another man climbed the gate and went up to the car, which had come to a standstill ten yards or so away. Drummond heard the sound of a window being lowered, and an excited conversation: then the man who had approached the car stepped back again into the glare of the headlights.

"Open the gate," he said curtly, and there was a sardonic grin on his face.

Drummond was waiting tensely. If he was to bring it off, it would be a matter of seconds and half-seconds. Little by little he edged nearer to the drive, as a man with what appeared to be a huge glove on his hand approached the gate. There was a bright flash as he pressed down the catch and the circuit was broken, and at the same moment the headlights on the car went out, while an inside light was switched on.

And Drummond stopped dead—frozen in his tracks. The car was moving forward slowly, and he could see the people inside clearly. One was Count Zadowa—*alias* Mr. Atkinson; one was the Reverend Theodosius Longmoor. But the other—and it was the third person on whom his eyes were fixed with a hopeless feeling of impotent rage—the other was Phyllis herself. The two men were holding her in front of them, so that to fire was an impossibility, and Peterson was smiling out of the window with the utmost benevolence.

Then they were past him, and he watched the red tail lamp disappearing up the drive, while the gate was shut behind them. Another flashing spark stabbed the darkness—the circuit was complete again. And with a feeling of sick, helpless fury, Drummond realized that it had all been useless. He was exactly where he had been half an hour before, with the vital difference that the events of the last half hour could not be repeated. He was caught: it was the finish. Somehow or other, the poor girl must have blundered right into the car, and probably asked the occupants for help. She wouldn't have known who they were; she'd just stopped the car on spec, and—— He shook his fists impotently, and at that moment he heard a loud, powerful voice which he recognized at once speaking from the direction of the house.

"Unless Captain Drummond comes into the house within five minutes, I shall personally kill Mrs. Drummond."

And the voice was the voice of Carl Peterson.

CHAPTER 17

"YOU appear to have a wonderful faculty for remaining alive, my young friend," remarked Peterson two minutes later, gazing benevolently at Drummond over his clerical collar.

"Principally, Theo, my pet, because you've got such a wonderful faculty for making bloomers," answered Drummond affably.

No trace of the impotent rage he had given way to in the garden showed in his face as he spoke; and yet, in all conscience, the situation was desperate enough. He was unarmed—his revolver had been removed from him as he entered the house—and behind his chair stood two men, each with the muzzle of a gun an inch from his neck. In another corner sat Phyllis, and behind her stood an armed man, also. Every now and then his eyes stole around to her, and once he smiled reassuringly—an assurance he was far from feeling. But principally his eyes were fixed on the three men who were sitting at the table opposite him. In the center was Carl Peterson, smoking the inevitable cigar; and beside him sat Count Zadowa and the red-headed Russian, Yulowski.

"You can't imagine the pleasant surprise it gave me when your charming wife hailed my car," Peterson continued gently. "So unexpected: so delightful! And when I realized that you were running about in our grounds here, instead of being drowned as that fool No. 10 told me over the telephone—— By the way, where is No. 10?"

He turned, snarling, on the Russian, but it was one of the men behind Drummond's chair who answered.

"He's dead. This guy threw him on the live wires."

"Is that little Franz?" murmured Hugh Drummond, lighting a cigarette. "Yes—I regret to state that he and I had words, and my impression is that he has passed away. Do you mind standing a little farther away?" he

continued, addressing the men behind him. "You're tickling the back of my neck, and it makes me go all goosey."

"Do you mean to say," said the Russian in his harsh voice, "that it was you and only you outside there?"

"You have guessed it, Adolph," answered Drummond, speaking mechanically. It had seemed to him, suddenly, that, unseen by the others, Phyllis was trying to convey some message. "Alone I did it, to say nothing of that squib-faced bird upstairs with the long arms. In fact without wishing to exaggerate, I think the total bag is five—with dear old '*pericoloso sporgersi*' as an 'also ran.' "

What was she trying to make him understand?

AND then suddenly she began to laugh hysterically, and he half rose from his seat, only to sit down again abruptly as he felt the cold ring of a revolver pressed into the nape of his neck.

"Three and two make five," said Phyllis, half laughing and half crying, "and one makes six. I worked it out to-night, and it all came right."

She went on aimlessly for a while in the same strain, till the Russian swung round on her with a snarl, and told her to shut her mouth. He was talking in low tones to Peterson, and, with one searching look at Hugh, she relapsed into silence. There was no hysteria in that look, and his heart began to pound suddenly in his excitement. For 3256 Mayfair was the number of Peter Darrell's telephone, and she could only mean one thing—that she had got through to Peter before she stopped the car. And if that was so there was still hope, if only he could gain time. Time was the essential factor: time he must have somehow. And how was he to get it?

Not by the quiver of an eyelid did the expression on his face change: he still smoked on placidly, looking with resigned boredom at the three men who were now conferring earnestly together. But his mind was racing madly, as he turned things over this way and that.

If his supposition was right, Carl Peterson was in ignorance of the fact that a message had been got through. And in that lay the only chance. Time—he must gain time, that was obvious.

But how was he going to get a respite? For this time he could not hope for another mistake. It was the end, and he knew it.

No trace of mercy showed in the faces of the three men opposite him. He caught occasional remarks, and after a while he realized what the matter under discussion was. Evidently the red-headed Russian was in favor of killing him violently, and at once—and it was Count Zadowa who was advocating caution, while Peterson sat between them listening impassively, with his eyes fixed on Drummond.

"Bayonet the pair of them," snarled Yulowski at length, as if tired of arguing the point. "I'll do the job if you're too squeamish, and we'll bury 'em both with the rest of the bodies in the grounds somewhere. Who's to know? Who's to find out?"

BUT Count Zadowa shook his head vigorously. "That's just where you're wrong, my friend. No one would see you do it more willingly than I—but you've got to remember the rest of his gang."

Yulowski shrugged his shoulders, and leaned back in his chair.

"Have it your own way," he remarked. "I don't care how they're killed, as long as they *are* killed, If you think it's necessary to pretend there has been an accident, we'll have an accident. The only point is, what sort of an accident."

But Count Zadowa had apparently not got as far as that, and he relapsed into silence. His powers of imagination were not sufficiently great to supply the necessary details, and it was left to Carl Peterson to decide matters.

"Nothing is easier," he remarked suavely, and his eyes were still fixed on Drummond. "We are discussing, my young friend," he continued, raising his voice slightly, "the best way of getting rid of you and your charming wife. I regret that she must share your fate, but I see no way out of it. To keep her permanently about the premises would be too great an inconvenience; and since we can't let her go without involving ourselves in unpleasant notoriety, I fear—as I said—that she must join you. My friend Yulowski wishes to bayonet you both, and bury you in the grounds. He has done a lot of that sort of thing in his time, and I believe I am right in stating that his hand has not lost its cunning since leaving Russia. On the other hand, Count Zadowa, whom you know of old, quite rightly points out that there are the members of your ridicuous gang, who know about him, and might very easily find out about me. And when in a few days your motor car is hoisted out of the water, and is traced by the registration number as being yours, he fears that not only may he find things very awkward, but that a certain amount of unenviable and undesirable limelight may be thrown on this part of the country, and incidentally on this house. You follow our difficulties so far?"

"With the utmost clarity, Theo," answered Drummond pleasantly.

"IT'S always such a pleasure talking to you," continued Peterson. "You're so unexpectedly quick on the uptake. Well then—to proceed. Though it will not interfere with me personally—as I leave England in four hours—it will interfere considerably with my plans if the police come poking their noses into this house. We like to hide our light under a bushel, Captain Drummond: we prefer to do our little bit unnoticed. So I feel sure that you will be only too ready to help us in any way you can, and fall in with my suggestion for your decease with good will. I have a very warm regard for you in many ways, and I should hate to think that there was any bad blood between us at the end."

"Carl—my pet—you'll make me cry in a minute," said Drummond quietly. To all outward appearances he was calm, but a little pulse was beginning to hammer in his throat, and his mouth felt strangely dry. He knew he was being played with as a mouse is played with by a cat, and it was all he could do to keep himself from demanding outright to know what was coming. Out of the corner of his eye he could see Phyllis sitting very white and still, but he didn't dare look at her squarely for fear he might break down. And then, still in the same tone, Peterson went on:

"I knew I could rely on you to meet me. And now to continue: As my friend Zadowa most justly observed—we want an accident: a *bona-fide* accident, which will relieve the world of your presence and will bring no scorching glare of publicity upon this house or on any of my confrères who remain in England. You may recall that that was my original idea, only you seem in the most extraordinary way to have escaped from being drowned. Still, as far as it goes, we have a very good foundation to build on. Your car—duly perceived by the gentleman of limited intelligence who works the bridge—went over the edge. You were duly perceived in it. Strangely enough, his eyesight must have been defective—or else he was so flustered by your amazing action that he was incapable of noticing everything at such a moment. Because he actually failed to see that

your charming wife was seated beside you. In the moment of panic when she realized you had fainted, she leaned forward—doubtless to try to throw out the clutch. Yes"—his eyes, cold and expressionless, were turned momentarily on Phyllis—"I think that is what she must have done. That accounts for the not very intelligent gate opener failing to see her. But that she was there is certain. Because, Captain Drummond, both bodies will be recovered from the river—the day after tomorrow, shall we say?—some two or three miles downstream."

"Your efforts at drowning have not been vastly successful up to date, Carl, have they?" said Drummond genially. "Do I understand that we are both to be taken out and held under the water, or are you going to use the bath here? Or are you again going to experiment with that dope of yours?"

"Wrong on all counts," answered Peterson. "You are far too large and strong, my dear Drummond, to be drowned by such rudimentary methods. And it is more than likely that even if we attempted to do it, the fact that you struggled would be revealed in a post-mortem examination. And that would spoil everything, wouldn't it? No longer would it appear to be an accident. Why—I might as well agree at once to Yulowski's suggestion of the bayonet. Pray give me credit, my dear young friend, for a little more brains than that."

"I do, Theo: I assure you I do," said Drummond earnestly. "It's only my terrible fear that you'll again make a hash of it that inspires my remarks."

"Thank you a thousand times," murmured the clergyman gently.

HE was leaning forward, his elbows on the table—and for the first time Drummond understood something of the diabolical hatred which Peterson felt for him. He had never shown it before: he was far too big a man ever to betray his feeling unnecessarily. But now, as he sat facing him, gently rubbing his big white hands together, Drummond understood.

"Thank you a thousand times," he repeated in the same gentle voice. "And since you are so concerned about the matter, I shall tell you my plan in some detail. When the car crashed into the water it carried you and your wife with it. We have got as far as that, haven't we? As it plunged downward you—still unconscious from your dreadful and sudden fainting fit—were hurled out. Your wife, in a magnificent endeavor to save you, rose in her seat and was hurled out, too. I think we can safely say that, don't you, seeing that the not too intelligent gatekeeper could not have seen the car as it fell?"

"Go on," said Drummond quietly.

"Interested, I hope," murmured Peterson. "Well—to proceed. You were both hurled out as the car plunged into the water, and somewhat naturally you were both thrown forward. Head foremost, you will note, Drummond, you left the car—and your heads struck the stonework of the opposite pier with sickening force, just before you reached the water. In fact, a marked feature of the case, when this dreadful accident is reported in the papers, will be the force with which you both struck that pier. Your two heads were terribly battered. In fact, I have but little doubt that the coroner will decide, when your bodies are recovered some few miles downstream—that you were not in reality drowned, but that the terrific impact on the stone pier killed you instantly. Do you think it's sound, up to date?"

"I THINK it's damned unsound," remarked Drummond languidly. "If you propose to take me and endeavor to make my head impinge on a stone wall, some one is going to get a thick ear. Besides, the bridge isn't open, and even your pal, the not too intelligent gatekeeper, might stick in his toes a bit. Of course"—he added hopefully—"you might say you were doing it for the movies."

The red-headed Russian was snarling venomously.

"Let me get at him, chief. He won't try being funny again."

"No. I shall be too occupied sprinkling myself with insect powder," retorted Drummond vulgarly. "Why, you beast, if you got at me, as you call it, and there wasn't half a battalion of infantry holding guns at my head, I'd break your neck with one hand strapped behind my back."

The Russian half rose to his feet, his teeth bared, and Peterson pulled him back into his chair, where he sat tensely awaiting further orders.

"You'll get your chance in a moment or two, Yulowski," he remarked savagely. Then he turned once more on Drummond, and the genial look had vanished from his face. "Doubtless your humor appeals to some people; it does not to me. Moreover, I am in rather a hurry. I do not propose, Captain Drummond, to take you to the bridge and endeavor to make your head impinge on a wall, as you call it. There is another far simpler

A Thrilling New Serial By Major McNeile

IN the luxurious atmosphere of a Swiss hotel, overlooking a glorious panorama of Alpine scenery, was launched the great diamond conspiracy.

From the day Professor Goodman capped his scientific career with a discovery that would upset the stability of the world's diamond trade, his life was at stake. The master criminal of Europe saw his chance to steal the secret and attain power unparalleled in modern times.

With this situation as a basis Major McNeile has written a novel that no reader who has enjoyed "The Black Gang" can afford to miss.

"The Third Round," Major McNeile's new serial, will begin in McCLURE'S *for September.*

method of producing the same result. The impinging will take place in this house. As a soldier you should know the result of a blow over the head with the butt of a rifle. And I can assure you that there will be no bungling this time. Yulowski is an expert in such matters, and I shall stay myself to see that it is done. I think we can give a very creditable imitation of what would have happened had my little story been true, and to-morrow night—I see that it is getting a little too light now for the purpose—your two bodies will be carried over and dropped in the river. The length of time you will both have been dead will be quite correct, within an hour or so—and everything will be most satisfactory for all concerned."

DRUMMOND passed his tongue over his lips, and despite himself his voice shook a little.

"Am I to understand," he said after a moment, "that you propose to let that man butcher us here—in this house—with a rifle?"

"Just so," answered Peterson. "That is exactly what you are to understand."

"You are going to let him bash my wife over the head with a rifle butt?"

"I am going to order him to do so," said Peterson mildly. "And very shortly at that. We must not have any mistakes over the length of time you've both been dead. I confess it sounds drastic, but I can assure you it will be quite sudden. Yulowski, as I told you, is an expert. He had a lot of experience in Russia."

"You inhuman devil!" muttered Drummond dazedly. "You can do what you like to me, but for heaven's sake let her off."

He was staring fascinated at the Russian, who had risen and crossed to a cupboard in the wall. There was something almost maniacal in the look on his face—the look of a savage, brute beast, confronted with the prey it desires.

"Impossible, my dear young friend," murmured Peterson regretfully. "It affords me no pleasure to have her killed, but I have no alternative. To see you dead, I would cross two continents," he snarled suddenly, "but"—his voice became normal again—"only bitter necessity compels me to adopt such measures with Phyllis. You see, she knows too much."

He whispered to Count Zadowa, who rose and left the room, to return shortly with half a dozen more men.

"Yes, she knows too much, and so I fear I cannot let her off. She would be able to tell such a lot of inconvenient things to the police. This house is so admirably adapted for certain of our activities that it would be a world of pities to draw undesirable attention to it."

BUT Drummond was paying no attention to him. His eyes were fixed on the Russian, who had come back slowly into the center of the room, carrying a rifle in his hand. It was an ordinary Russian service rifle, and a bayonet was fixed in position. Yulowski handled it lovingly, as he stood beside Peterson—and suddenly Count Zadowa turned white and began to tremble. Even Peterson's iron nerves seemed a little shaken, and his hand trembled as he removed his cigar. But there was no sign of relenting on his face; no sign of faltering in his voice as he spoke to the men who had just come into the room.

"In the interests of us all," he remarked steadily, "I have decided that it is necessary to kill both the prisoners." He made a sign, and Drummond, sitting almost paralyzed in his chair, found both his arms gripped, with three men hanging on to each.

Yulowski handled his rifle lovingly, and once again his teeth showed in a wolfish grin as he turned to Carl.

"Which shall I take first, chief?" he said carelessly.

"The point is immaterial," returned Peterson. "I think perhaps the woman."

Drummond tried to speak and failed. His tongue was clinging to the roof of his mouth: everything in the room was dancing before his eyes. Dimly he saw the red-headed brute Yulowski swinging his rifle to test it: dimly he saw Phyllis sitting bolt upright, with a calm, scornful expression on her face, while two men held her by the arms so that she could not move. And suddenly he croaked horribly.

Then he saw Yulowski put down the rifle and listen intently for a moment.

"What's the matter?" snapped Peterson irritably.

"Do you hear the different note to that dynamo?" said Yulowski.

"What the hell's that got to do with it?" roared Peterson. "Get on with it, damn you!—and attend to the dynamo afterward."

Yulowski nodded, and picked up his rifle again.

"The last time," he said, turning on Drummond with a dreadful look of evil in his face, "that this rifle was used by me was in a cellar in Russia—on even more exalted people than you. I brought it with me as a memento, never thinking I should have the pleasure of using it again."

He swung it over his head, and Drummond shut his eyes—to open them again a moment later, as the door was flung open and a man distraught with terror dashed into the room.

"The Black Gang!" he shouted wildly. "Hundreds of them—all round the house. They've cut the wires."

WITH a fearful curse, Peterson leaped to his feet, and the men holding Drummond, dumfounded at the sudden turning of the tables, let go his arms. Yulowski stood staring foolishly at the door, and what happened then occurred so quickly that none of the stupefied onlookers raised a finger to prevent it.

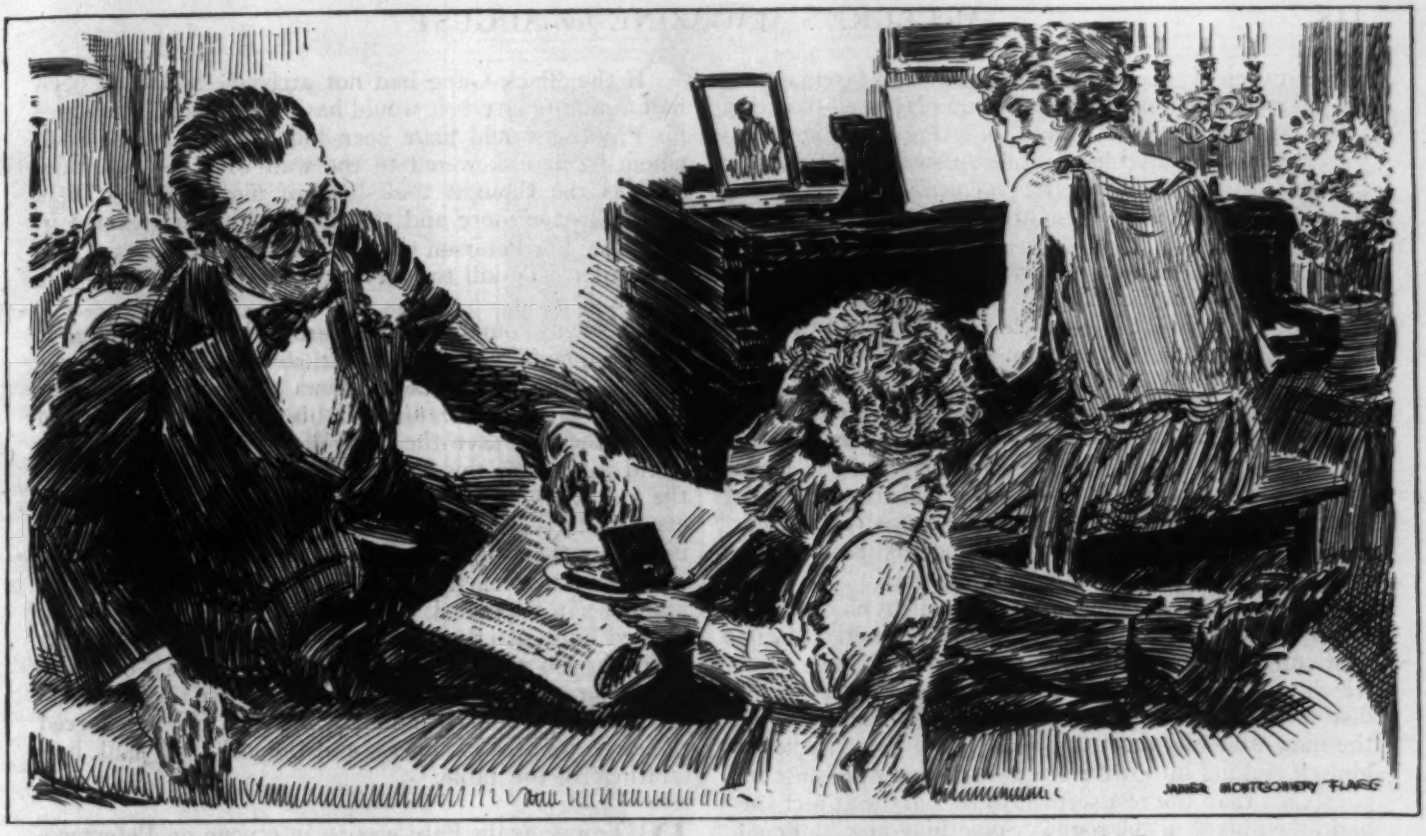
With the howl of an enraged beast, Drummond hurled himself on the Russian—blind mad with fury. And when two seconds later a dozen black-cowled, black-hooded figures came swarming in through the door, for one instant they paused in sheer horror.

Pinned to the wall with his own bayonet, which stuck out six inches beyond his back was a red-headed, red-bearded man gibbering horribly in a strange language; while creeping toward a benevolent-looking clergyman, who crouched in a corner, was a man whom they scarce recognized as their leader, so appalling was the look of malignant fury on his face.

Carl Peterson was no coward. In the world in which he moved, many strange stories were told of his iron nerve and his complete disregard of danger. Moreover, Nature had endowed him with physical strength far above the average. But now, for perhaps the first time in his life, he knew the meaning of stark, abject terror.

The sinister men in black—members of that very gang he had come over to England to destroy—seemed to fill the room. Silently, as if they had been drilled to it, they disarmed every one: then they stood round the walls—waiting. No one spoke: only the horrible imprecations of the dying Russian broke the silence, as he feebly strove to pull from his chest the rifle and bayonet which had fixed him to the wall as a dead butterfly is fixed in a collection with a pin.

Peterson had a fleeting vision of a girl with white face and wide, staring eyes, beside whom were standing two of the motionless black figures as guards—the girl he had sentenced to death. [*Continued on page 118*]



Here they are Sir! the world's most distinguished cigarettes—*in a special new size*—20 *for* 30¢

Try them tonight for your Luxury Hour

-that easy chair hour after the day's toil, when every man feels entitled to taste life's best.· · Soon you will smoke them *exclusively*

PALL MALL *Specials*
New size—plain ends only
20 *for* 30¢

No change in size or price of PALL MALL *Regulars* [cork tip]

For the connoisseur's taste—and the thrifty man's purse—here's the best cigarette news in many a day.

Famous Pall Mall—the most distinguished of all cigarettes—is now available in a special new size—20 for 30c.

At "a shilling in London—and a quarter here," Pall Malls have always been the world's best cigarette buy. But the makers of Pall Mall have evolved new economies in manufacture which leave the quality intact, while materially cutting the cost to you. Hence, the new "PALL MALLSPECIAL"—twenty genuine Pall Malls for 30c—a triumph in volume production.

A *trimmer* cigarette than the Pall Mall Regular—a little smaller in girth, but with plain ends *only*—and with the same exquisite blend of the choicest Turkish tobaccos that has always made Pall Mall incomparable.

Try Pall Mall *Specials* tonight for *your* Luxury Hour.

20 *for* 30¢

WEST OF THE ROCKIES 20 *for* 35¢

And then his eyes came back again as if fascinated to the man who was coming toward him. He tried to shrink back farther into his corner, plucking with nerveless fingers at his clerical collar—while the sweat poured off his face in a stream. For there was no mercy in Hugh Drummond's eyes. And Peterson realized he deserved none.

AND then it came. No word was spoken—Drummond was beyond speech. His hands shot out and Peterson felt himself drawn relentlessly toward the man he had planned to kill, not two minutes before. It was his turn now to wonder desperately if it was some hideous nightmare, even while he struggled impotently in his final frenzy with a man whose strength seemed equal to the strength of ten. He was choking: the grip on his throat was not human in its ferocity. There was a great roaring in his ears, and suddenly he ceased to struggle. The glare in Drummond's eyes hypnotized him, and for the only time in his life he gave up hope.

The room was spinning around: the silent black figures, the dying Yulowski, the girl—all seemed merged in one vast jumble of color growing darker and darker, out of which one thing and one thing only stood out clear and distinct on his dying consciousness—the blazing eyes of the man who was throttling him. And then, as he felt himself sinking into utter blackness, some dim sense less paralyzed than the rest seemed to tell him that a change had taken place in the room. Something new had come into that whirling nightmare that spun around him: dimly he heard a voice—loud and agonized—a voice he recognized. It was a woman's voice, and after a while the grip on his throat relaxed. He staggered back against the wall, gasping and spluttering, and gradually the room ceased to whirl round—the iron bands ceased to press upon his heart and lungs.

It was Irma who stood there: Irma whose piteous cry had pierced through to his brain: Irma who had caused those awful hands to relax their grip just before it was too late. Little by little everything steadied down: he found he could see again—could hear. He still crouched shaking against the wall, but he had got a respite, anyway—a breathing space. And that was all that mattered for the moment—that and the fact that the madness was gone from Hugh Drummond's eyes.

The black figures were still standing motionless around the walls; the Russian was lolling forward—dead; Phyllis was lying back in her chair unconscious. But Peterson had eyes for none of these things: Count Zadowa shivering in a corner—the huddled group of his own men standing in the center of the room he passed by without a glance. His gaze was fixed on Drummond—Drummond, who stood facing Irma with an almost dazed expression on his face, while she pleaded with him in an agony of supplication.

"He ordered that man to brain my wife with a rifle butt," said Drummond hoarsely. "And yet you ask for mercy."

HE passed his hand two or three times over his forehead as Irma once again broke into wild pleadings; then he turned and stared at Peterson. She stopped at last, and still he stared at the gasping clergyman, as if making up his mind. And, in truth, that was precisely what he was doing. Like most big men he was slow to anger, but once his temper was roused it did not cool easily. And never before in his life had he been in the grip of such cold, maniacal fury as had held him during the last few minutes. Right from the start Peterson had deceived him. He had done his best to murder him, and, not content with that, he had given orders for Phyllis and him to be butchered in cold blood.

If the Black Gang had not arrived—had they been half a minute later—it would have been over. Phyllis—his Phyllis—would have been killed by that arch-devil whom he had skewered to the wall with his own rifle. And as the thought took hold of him, his great fists clenched once more and the madness again gleamed in his eyes. For Peterson was the real culprit: Peterson was the leader. To kill the servant and not the master was unjust.

He swung round on the cowering clergyman and once again gripped him by the throat, shaking him as a terrier shakes a rat. He felt the girl Irma plucking feebly at his arm, but he took no notice. In his mind there was room for no thought save the fixed determination to rid the world forever of this monstrous blackguard. And still the motionless black figures round the wall gave no sign, even when the girl rushed wildly from one to the other, imploring their aid.

They knew their leader, and though they did not know what happened to cause his dreadful rage they trusted him utterly and implicitly. Whether it was lawful or not was beside the point: it was just or Hugh Drummond would not have done it. And so they watched and waited, while Drummond, his face blazing, forced the clergyman to his knees, and the girl Irma sank half fainting by the table.

BUT once again Fate was to intervene on Peterson's behalf, through the instrumentality of a woman. And, mercifully for him, the intervention came from the only woman—from the only human being—who could have influenced Drummond at that moment. It was Phyllis who opened her eyes suddenly, and, half-dazed still with the horror of the last few minutes, gazed round the room.

She saw the huddled group of men in the center: she saw the Russian lolling grotesquely forward, supported on his own rifle: she saw the Black Gang silent and motionless like avenging judges around the walls. And then she saw her husband bending Carl Peterson's neck farther and farther back, till it seemed as if it must crack at any moment.

For a second she stared at Hugh's face, and saw on it a look which she had never seen before—a look so terrible, that she gave a sharp, convulsive cry.

"Let him go, Hugh—let him go! Don't do it."

Her voice pierced his brain, though for a moment it made no impression on the muscles of his arms. A slightly bewildered look came into his eyes.

Let him go—let Carl Peterson go! That was what Phyllis was asking him to do—Phyllis who had stood at death's door not five minutes before. Let him go! And suddenly the madness faded from his eyes: his hands relaxed their grip, and Carl Peterson slipped unconscious to the floor—unconscious, but still breathing. He had let him go, and after a while he stepped back and glanced slowly around the room. His eyes lingered for a moment on the dead Russian, they traveled thoughtfully along the line of black figures. And gradually a smile began to appear on his face—a smile which broadened into a grin.

"Perfectly sound advice, old thing," he remarked at length. "Straight from the stable. I really believe I'd almost lost my temper."

CHAPTER 18

IT was a week later. In Sir Bryan Johnstone's office two men were seated. And one of them wore an expression of complete bewilderment.

"But it's incredible, Johnstone," he remarked, for the fiftieth time. "Incredible!" [*Continued on page 119.*]

The Black Gang

[*Continued from page* 118]

"Nevertheless, Sir John," returned the other, "it is true. I have absolute, indisputable proof of the whole thing. And if you may remember, I have long drawn the government's attention to the spread of these activities in England."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Sir John Haverton, of the Cabinet, "but you have never given us chapter and verse like this before."

"To be perfectly frank with you," answered Sir Bryan, "I didn't realize it fully myself until now. Had it not been for the Black Gang stumbling upon this house in Essex—Maybrick Hall—overpowering the owners and putting me on their track, much of this would never have come to light."

"But who are the members of this Black Gang?" demanded the bewildered Cabinet Minister.

Sir Bryan gave an enigmatic smile.

"At the moment, perhaps," he murmured, "that point had better remain in abeyance. I may say that in the whole of my official career I have never received such a profound surprise as when I found out who the leader of the gang was. In due course, Sir John, it may be necessary to communicate to you his name; but in the meantime I suggest that we should concentrate on the information he has provided us with, and treat him as anonymous. I think you will agree that he has deserved well of his country."

"Damned well!" grunted the other. "He can have a seat in the Cabinet, if this is his usual form."

"I hardly think," returned Sir Bryan, smiling even more enigmatically, "that he would help you very much in your proceedings, though he might enliven them."

But the Cabinet Minister was once more engrossed in the report he was holding.

"Incredible, "he muttered again. "Simply incredible."

"And yet, as I said before—the truth," said the other. "You have there, Sir John"—he spoke with sudden passion—"the definite proofs of a gigantic attempt at world revolution on the Russian plan. You have in front of you there the definite proofs that eighty per cent of the men engaged in this plot are not visionaries, swayed by some grandiloquent scheme of world reform—are not martyrs sacrificing their lives for what seems to them the good of the community—but criminals, and in many cases murderers. You have there before you the definite proofs that eighty per cent of these men think only of one thing—the lining of their own pockets, and to carry out that object they are prepared to destroy completely sound labor in this and every other country.

"It's not as difficult as it looks. Cancer is a small growth compared to the full body of the victim it kills. We're a free country, Sir John; but the time is coming when freedom, as we understood it in the past, will have to cease. We can't go on as the cesspit of Europe, sheltering microbes who infect us as soon as they are here. We want disinfecting; we want it badly. And then we want sound teaching, with the best representatives of the employers and the best representatives of the employed as the teachers. Otherwise, you'll get—destruction.

"That's what they're teaching the children. Destruction: destruction: destruction—and

[*Continued on page* 120]

"BEST IN THE LONG RUN"

Goodrich takes the "Guess" out of TIRE buying. When you buy Goodrich Silvertown Cord tires you eliminate guess-work, because there is only one Silvertown. It is always the same—the highest quality in material and workmanship, and you can get it in all sizes. The Goodrich name appears on only one grade of cord tires and that is the Silvertown. We value our name too highly to put it on a tire that might fall short of delivering the highest standard of tire service. Your Goodrich dealer is selected, because he is a forward-looking merchant upon whom you can rely. He is ready for you with a full line of Silvertowns.

THE B. F. GOODRICH RUBBER COMPANY
ESTABLISHED 1870

In Canada—The B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company, Ltd.
Toronto • Montreal • Winnipeg

Goodrich
SILVERTOWN CORD

SOLD BY GOODRICH DEALERS THE WORLD OVER

The dread Pyorrhea begins with bleeding gums

PYORRHEA'S infecting germs cause many ills. Medical science has proved this.

Many diseased conditions are now known often to be the result of Pyorrhea germs that breed in pockets about the teeth. Rheumatism, anaemia, nervous disorders and other diseases have been traced in many cases to this Pyorrhea infection.

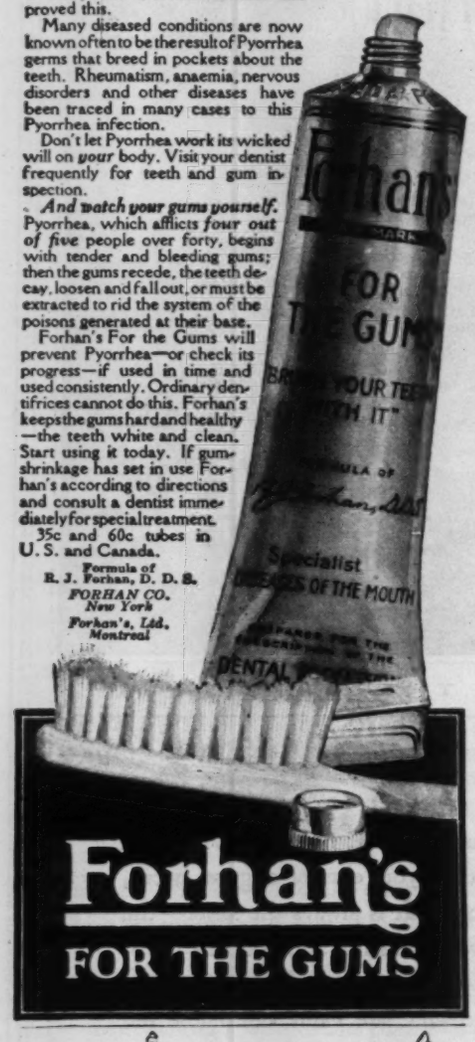
Don't let Pyorrhea work its wicked will on *your* body. Visit your dentist frequently for teeth and gum inspection.

And watch your gums yourself. Pyorrhea, which afflicts *four out of five* people over forty, begins with tender and bleeding gums; then the gums recede, the teeth decay, loosen and fall out, or must be extracted to rid the system of the poisons generated at their base.

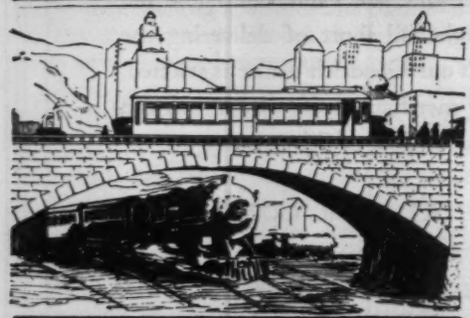
Forhan's For the Gums will prevent Pyorrhea—or check its progress—if used in time and used consistently. Ordinary dentifrices cannot do this. Forhan's keeps the gums hard and healthy—the teeth white and clean. Start using it today. If gum-shrinkage has set in use Forhan's according to directions and consult a dentist immediately for special treatment.

35c and 60c tubes in U. S. and Canada.

Formula of R. J. Forhan, D. D. S.
FORHAN CO.
New York
Forhan's, Ltd.
Montreal



Forhan's
FOR THE GUMS



BE A RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTOR

EARN UP TO $250.00 PER MO.

POSITION GUARANTEED!

MANY unusual opportunities for trained men in this fascinating profession. Healthful, outdoor work; travel or remain near home; something new every day. Meet big railway officials.

Start at $110 per month, expenses paid. Prepare at home in three months' spare-time study. Any average man can qualify.

YOU TAKE NO RISK

Position guaranteed or money refunded. You have nothing to lose. Send coupon today for complete information. Don't delay!

Standard Business Training Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

Standard Business Training Inst., Buffalo, N. Y. Booklet
Send me, entirely free, full particulars about course in Railway Traffic Inspection
No. Dpt.
Name.....
Street.....
City.....

The Black Gang

[*Continued from page* 119]

not a syllable devoted to *con*struction. What are they going to put in its place? They don't know—and they don't care—as long as they get paid for the teaching."

Sir John Haverton nodded thoughtfully.

"I must go into all this in detail," he remarked. "But in the meantime you have roused my curiosity most infernally about this Black Gang of yours. I seem to remember some extraordinary manifesto in the paper—something to do with that blackguard Latter, wasn't it?"

Sir Bryan leaned back in his chair and lit a cigarette. "There are one or two gaps I haven't filled in myself at the moment," he answered. "But I can tell you very briefly what led us to our discoveries at that house in Essex of which I spoke to you—Maybrick Hall. About six days ago I received a typewritten communication of a similar type to one or two which I had seen before. A certain defect in the typewriter made it clear that the source was the same—and that source was the leader of the Black Gang. Here is the communication."

He opened a drawer in his desk, and passed a sheet of paper to the Cabinet Minister.

If (it ran) jolly old McIver will take his morning constitutional to Maybrick Hall, in Essex, he will find much to interest him in that delightful and rural spot. Many specimens both dead and alive, will be found there, all in a splendid state of preservation. He will also find a great many interesting devices in the house. Above all, let him be careful of an elderly clergyman of beneficent aspect, whose beauty is marred by a stiff and somewhat swollen neck, accompanied by a charming lady who answers to the name of Janet. They form the peerless gems of the collection, and were on the point of leaving the country with the enclosed packet which I removed from them for safe keeping. My modesty forbids me to tell an unmarried man like you in what portion of dear Janet's garments this little bag was found, but there's no harm in your guessing.

After McIver has done this little job, he might like a trip to the north. There was an uninhabited island off the west coast of Mull, which is uninhabited no longer. He may have everything he finds there, with my love.

SIR JOHN laid down the paper and stared at the Director of Criminal Investigation.

"Is this the rambling of a partially diseased intellect?" he inquired, with mild sarcasm.

"Nothing of the sort," returned the other shortly. "McIver and ten plain-clothes men went immediately to Maybrick Hall. And they found it a very peculiar place. There were some fifteen men there—trussed up like so many fowls, and alive. They were laid out in a row in the hall. Enthroned in state, in two chairs at the end, and also trussed hand and foot, were the beneficent clergyman and Miss Janet. So much for the living ones, with the exception of an Italian, who was found peacefully sleeping upstairs, with his right wrist padlocked to the wall by a long chain. I've mentioned him last, because he was destined to play a very important part in the matter." He frowned suddenly. "A very important part, confound him!" he repeated. "However, we will now pass to the other specimens. In the grounds were discovered—a dead fowl, a dead fox, a dead hound—and three dead men."

Sir John ejaculated explosively.

"They had all died from the same cause," continued the other imperturbably, "electrocution. But that was nothing compared to what they found inside. In an upstairs room was a dreadful-looking specimen, more like an ape than a man, whose neck was broken. In addition, the main artery of his left arm had been severed with a knife. And even that was mild to what they found downstairs. Supported against the wall was a red-headed man stone dead. A bayonet fixed to a rifle had been driven clean through his chest, and stuck six inches into the wall behind him. And on that the body was supported."

"GOOD heavens!" said Sir John, aghast. "Who had done it?"

"The leader of the Black Gang had done it all, fighting desperately for his own life and that of his wife. One of the men lashed up in the hall turned king's evidence and told us everything. I'm not going to weary you with the entire story, because you wouldn't believe it. This man had heard everything: had been present through it all. He told us how, finally, the leader of the Black Gang and his wife were sentenced to death by the clergyman——Clergyman!" Sir Bryan shook his fist in the air. "I'd give a year's pay to have laid my hands on that clergyman."

"He escaped?" cried the other.

"All in due course," said Sir Bryan. "The leader of the Gang and his wife were sentenced to death by having their brains bashed out with the butt of a rifle—after which they were to be thrown into the river. It was to be made to appear an accident. And the man who was to do it was a Russian called Yulowski—one of the men who butchered the Russian Royal family—— A devil of the most inhuman description. He literally had the rifle raised to kill the girl, when the Black Gang, having cut the wire fence, arrived in the nick of time. And it was then that the leader of that gang, who had thought he was on the point of seeing his wife's brains dashed out, took advantage of the utter confusion and sprang on the Russian with a roar of rage. The man who told us stated that he had never dreamed such a blow was possible as the rifle thrust which pierced clean through the Russian. It split him like a rotten cabbage, and he died in three minutes."

"But, my dear fellow," spluttered the Cabinet Minister, "you can't expect me to believe all this! You're pulling my leg."

"Never further from it in my life, Haverton," said the other. "I admit it seems a bit over the odds, but every word I've told you is gospel. To return to the discoveries. McIver found that the house was the headquarters of a vast criminal organization. There were schemes of the most fantastic descriptions cut and dried in every detail. Some of them were stupid: some were not.

"Perhaps the most dangerous activity of all was what I have spoken about already—Maybrick Hall was the headquarters of these poisonous Proletarian Sunday Schools. But in addition to that there was forgery going on there on a big scale: money is necessary for their activities. There were also long lists of their agents in different parts of the country, and detailed instructions for fomenting industrial unrest. But you have it all there—you can read it at your leisure

for yourself. Particularly I commend to your notice, the series of pamphlets on Ireland, and the methods suggested for promoting discord between England and France and England and America."

Sir Bryan lit a cigarette.

"To return to the personal side of it. McIver, engrossed in his search, paid very little attention to the row of mummies in the hall. They certainly seemed extraordinarily safe, and one can hardly blame him. But the fact remains that, at some period during the morning, the Italian, who, if you remember, was padlocked in a bedroom upstairs, escaped. How I can't tell you: he must have had a key in his pocket. They found the padlock open, and the room empty. And going downstairs they found the chairs recently occupied by the clergyman and Miss Janet empty, also. Moreover, from that moment no trace of any of them has been found. It is as if the earth had opened and swallowed them. Which brings us to the packet enclosed with the letter from the leader of the Black Gang."

He crossed to a safe and took out the little chamois-skin bag of diamonds.

"Nice stones," he remarked quietly. "Worth literally a king's ransom. The pink one is part of the Russian crown jewels: the remainder belonged to the Grand Duke Georgius, who was murdered by the Bolshevists. His son, who had these in his possession, died ten days ago of an overdose of a sleeping draft administered, I fancy, by the beneficent clergyman calling himself the Reverend Theodosius Longmoor—the most amazing international criminal of this or any other age—the man who, with Miss Janet and the Italian, has vanished into thin air, right under McIver's nose."

"And you mean to say this man has been in England and you haven't laid him by the heels?" said Sir John incredulously.

"Unfortunately, that is what I mean," answered the other. "The police of four continents know about him, but that's a very different thing from proof. This time we had proof—these diamonds: and the man has vanished—utterly and completely. He is the master mind who controls and directs, but very rarely actually does anything himself. That's why he's so devilishly difficult to catch. But we'll do it sooner or later."

The Cabinet Minister was once more studying the typewritten communication from the leader of the Black Gang.

"It's the most astounding affair, this, Johnstone," he said at length. "Most astounding. And what's all this about the island off the coast of Mull?"

Sir Bryan laughed.

"Not the least astounding part of the whole show, I assure you." Again he laughed.

"Well, McIver went there, and after some little difficulty located it, out of the twenty or thirty to which the description might apply. He found it far from uninhabited, just as that letter says. He found it occupied by some fifty or sixty rabid anarchists—gentlemen who had mysteriously disappeared—who were presided over by twenty large demobilized soldiers commanded by an ex-sergeant-major of the Guards. The sixty frenzied anarchists, he gathered, were running a state on communist lines, as interpreted by the ex-sergeant-major. And the interpretation moved even McIver to tears of laughter. It appeared that once every three hours they were all drawn up in a row,

[*Continued on page* 125]

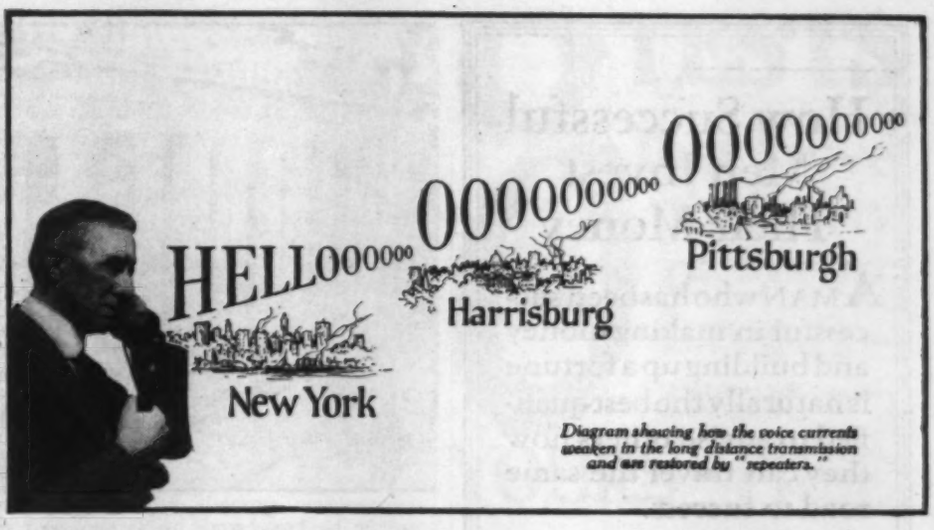


Diagram showing how the voice currents weaken in the long distance transmission and are restored by "repeaters."

Mastering Nature's Forces

Without the telephone "repeater," the entire electrical power available on the earth would not be sufficient to make trans-continental speech commercially possible. The three thousand repeaters now in use on Bell System long distance lines have increased the talking range of every telephone by thousands of miles. By making possible the use of smaller gauge wires, repeaters have kept down the cost of equipment by millions of dollars.

The repeater is only one out of scores of scientific developments of equal or greater importance in the advancement of telephone service. Bell System progress has been a continual encounter with seemingly impossible barriers, and a continual finding of new ways to overcome them. Each step in extending the range of speech has come only after years of study. Each important piece of telephone apparatus has had to be created for the need. Each working day this pioneering goes on. Nature is harnessed to a new duty and mechanical ingenuity improves the tools of service, as fast as science finds the way.

Not only is the Bell System daily conducting research within its own nation-wide organization, but it is studying the discoveries of the whole world of science for their possible application to telephone service. Only by such eternal vigilance has the United States been given the best and cheapest telephone service in the world.

"BELL SYSTEM"

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY

AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

One Policy, One System, Universal Service, and all directed toward Better Service

A Spare Time Income for YOU

McClure's Magazine is a publication of high literary merit for thoughtful Americans. Interesting fiction and unusual articles that deal with the life of America fill its pages, reflecting the progress of the United States. New things in the life of its people, whether on Main Street or Broadway, are chronicled in McCLURE'S each month. McCLURE'S takes in the whole broad span of human affairs.

The best fiction appearing in any American magazine today is to be found in McClure's. During a year its readers get 50 short stories and three complete novels of book length in serial form and from seventy to seventy-five articles, and editorial talks by S. S. McClure.

This is YOUR chance. You can profitably employ your spare time introducing McCLURE'S to your friends. The field is unlimited; there are no restrictions of territory; you may get subscribers anywhere and you will be well paid for your efforts. Write for terms to

Department S

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

80 Lafayette Street **New York, N. Y.**

How Successful Men Invest Their Money

A MAN who has been successful in making money and building up a fortune is naturally the best qualified to advise others how they can travel the same road to success.

A survey of the cases of several thousand successful investors—men well qualified to give financial advice—shows that 9 out of 10 follow two simple, easily understood rules—

First, they keep all their surplus funds constantly at work:

Second, they make sure of obtaining the best interest rate consistent with safety.

How to apply these fundamental principles and how to be sure of choosing investments that will give you not only complete safety, but also the best return consistent with safety, is set forth in a booklet published by S. W. Straus & Co. entitled "41 Years Without Loss to Any Investor." This booklet will be sent free on application. Write for it today. Ask for

BOOKLET H-1304

S. W. STRAUS & CO.

Est. 1882 Offices in 40 Cities Incorporated

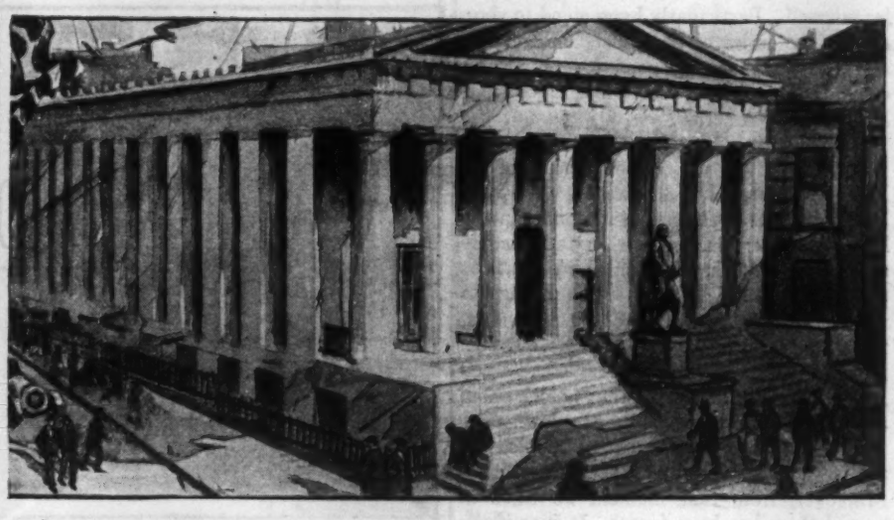
STRAUS BUILDING
565 Fifth Avenue
at 46th St.
NEW YORK

STRAUS BUILDING
6 North Clark Street
at Madison St.
CHICAGO

79 Post Street, SAN FRANCISCO

41 YEARS WITHOUT LOSS TO ANY INVESTOR

© 1923—S. W. S. & Co.



Bond Prices and Money Rates

By Franklin K. Sprague

AFTER following the major movements of the security markets over a period of years, and observing closely the investment public's reaction to these changes, one cannot escape the conclusion that the average investor is a far more eager purchaser of bonds and stocks on the rise than on the decline. All of us like to obtain our investments at the lowest possible price since our primary object is to place money safely where it will give the maximum income return.

We dislike to see securities we have bought depreciate and are anxious, therefore, to buy at the lowest quotation. But the fact remains that the average man who is willing to rush into a lively upward market and buy a bond at a level representing, say 25 per cent from the peak, hesitates about purchasing another bond of the same general class when the price has reacted to a corresponding level.

In this discussion we are dealing with the class of security that is influenced primarily by money rates and commodity prices, otherwise known as the cost of living. Good bonds and high-grade preferred stocks—the two kinds of securities that have a set, unchangeable income rate—are influenced primarily by these economic factors.

Recently there has been an opportunity for investors to buy income at relatively low prices. This is the result of a slow and steady decline in bonds and preferred stocks, starting last fall. An important point for the investor to remember is that he will find that sound bonds and preferred stocks possess the same degree of security at reduced prices, as they had a year ago when selling several points higher.

The policy of averaging down the price of a security by purchasing more of the same issue when it has reacted is sound, where it does not amount to sending good money after bad or where it does not entail the acquisition of an undue percentage of issues containing a business risk. As previously stated, the lowering of prices has worked to the advantage of the investor. It is unwise to be fearful when prices are cheap.

Why bond prices move in the opposite direction to money rates—upward when rates are declining and downward when money is becoming dear—is a question that has been asked in all sincerity by enough readers of McCLURE'S recently, to justify discussion at this time.

The end of an industrial boom finds money rates high, commodity prices, wages and materials high and the price of bonds low. Let us break into the business cycle at this point. Buying is curtailed and a feverish effort is made to unload goods bought at high prices in anticipation of a demand that did not last as long as expected. Prices slide downward rapidly.

Those corporations which anticipate events and start to liquidate early find themselves well supplied with cash. Others which continue to buy right up to the last day of the boom are caught with big inventories of high-priced goods and an abnormal total of notes due at the bank. The former have money to invest. The latter must be helped out of their difficulties.

Gradually goods are turned into cash, bank loans are reduced and more corporations—including the banks—come into possession of money for which the demand is decreasing, since production everywhere is reduced to the minimum. The free money brings rates down and the possessors of money are attracted by the low price of bonds. They buy bonds for temporary investment with the result that prices advance steadily.

While this is going on the price of everything that money will buy is still going down. Bonds and preferred stocks become more attractive as a convenient form of temporary investment, not only to the corporation, business man, and bank, but also to individual investors, because the $40, $50 or $60 received yearly as interest on a $1,000 bond has increasing purchasing power.

Eventually business improves, production increases, and, in time, corporations, business men and banks, having need for their money, retire gradually from their temporary bond investments. Further on the demand for money causes the pendulum of rates to swing slowly upward. The bond market must compete with the open money market, offering an increase in yield to correspond with the increase in money rates.

This increase in yield is accomplished by a

lowering of the market price for bonds. At the same time the prices of commodities advance and this influence again coöperates with higher money rates to cause a decline in bonds. The purchasing power of the bond declines. Therefore, the coupon loses some of its value.

The object of this explanation is not to give the investor a formula by the application of which he can avoid entering the bond market except when prices are at the bottom. Few, if any, men are competent to correlate all the signs and get from them a definite indication as to just where we are in a business cycle at a given time.

Toward the end of every boom period many of our greatest captains of industry and hordes of others misjudge the real situation as far as their business is concerned. It is not to be expected that the average investor can do much better. But by becoming familiar with the real reasons for alternate rise and fall of bond prices, he can avoid worrying over the downward swings and place himself in the frame of mind to carry out a definite investment program, avoiding the temptation to take profits in expectation of an opportunity to repurchase at a lower price.

Many a man starts as an investor and gradually becomes a trader, by trying to profit by the rise and fall of prices. The ultimate result of this practice leads more frequently to losses than to profits.

It has frequently been said of Wall Street that the time to buy securities is when others don't want them; in short, when they are being sacrificed for one reason or another. Thus, a decline in the bond market may be taken as a sign that the purchase time is at hand. There is a gauge to be found in the price course of gilt-edge securities over a period of years, for they fluctuate within a relatively narrow range.

Such bonds at or near the low point of, say two years, may well be considered as an investment opportunity, provided, of course, there have been no abnormal developments in this country or abroad and no adverse factors specifically affecting the bonds.

Financial Questions and Answers

Q. I own 100 shares of Republic Rubber Company second preferred stock for which I paid $97 a share. Under the proposed plan of reorganization it seems evident that unless I put in more money my investment is an entire loss. If this is correct, why is a corporation permitted to sell preferred stock having printed thereon a pledge to protect the stock with assets up to a certain specified amount per share? What does such a pledge amount to, and is there no way that the investor can secure protection legally?

A. Apparently you have an erroneous idea of what preference as to assets in the case of preferred stock means. Remember at the outset that the holder of preferred stock is not a creditor, but rather a partner whose limited share in profits is compensated for by a preferred claim in any distribution of assets in the event of liquidation or dissolution. The company does not "guarantee to protect the stock with assets up to a certain specified amount per share," as you put it.

There is a promise that in dissolution or liquidation the preferred will have preference over the common in any distribution of assets up to a specified maximum amount per share, but if the value of the assets does not equal that specified amount the preferred stockholder has no redress. A corporation can not give what it does not possess.

In the case of the Republic Rubber, the preferred is entitled to a maximum of 110, in case of voluntary liquidation or dissolution. The position of this company is such that it scarcely seems worth while for you, as a preferred stockholder, to send good money after bad.

Q. I will appreciate your opinion as to the safety of, and desirability of investing in the following bonds: U. S. of Brazil 8s, 1941; U. S. of Brazil 7½s, 1952; Argentine 5s, 1945; U. S. of Mexico 5s, 1945; International Mercantile Marine 6s, 1941; Seaboard Air Line Equipment bonds; Northern States Power, preferred stock; Goodyear Rubber Company, common stock, for speculation.

A. If these bonds are intended as an investment for all of your funds, or, in other words, if they are not to be added to a list already supported by high-grade securities, we cannot escape the suspicion that you are proceeding without any definite plan of investment.

The Brazil 7½s, by virtue of the fact that they are specifically secured by a quantity of coffee, are deserving of a place among the conservative investor's holdings. We do not hold, however, that these 7½ per cents, or others in the same general class, should form a foundation on which securities containing greater elements of risk should rest. Invest part of your funds in this issue, together with Argentine 5s, Seaboard Air Line Equipment Trust 4½s, 5s, 5½s, or 6s and some shares of Northern States Power 7 per cent preferred.

Even though an arrangement has been made for resuming interest payments on the Mexican 5s and amortizing overdue interest payments over a period of years, we cannot regard this bond as one containing the degree of soundness required by the average investor.

Mercantile Marine 6s contain an element of business risk, but we would rank them higher than the Brazil 8s and regard them as immeasurably better than Mexican 5s or Goodyear common stock.

Q. I would like your opinion of Armour & Company of Delaware First Mortgage Twenty Year 5½ per cent guaranteed gold bonds, Series "A," and Long Bell Lumber Company First Mortgage 6 per cent sinking fund gold bonds, Series "A;" also of International Mercantile Marine preferred, as a long-pull speculative investment. What of the future of Pure Oil Company?

A. Armour & Company of Delaware 5½s are a good investment. Long Bell Lumber Company 6s, while at present secured by standing timber, mills and equipment estimated at 200 per cent of the bonds outstanding, cannot be regarded as better than a second-grade investment suitable for any one who can afford to assume some measure of business risk.

The future of International Mercantile Marine preferred can be no more certain than the future of the shipping industry which, at present, is not in a flourishing condition.

And the present situation gives no assurance that even the present dividend rate will be maintained until shipping has turned the corner. Do not forget that before the war Marine preferred sold as low as $3 a share.

The Pure Oil Company was originally a public utility corporation, but in recent years has branched out quite extensively into oil production, refining and marketing. In view of the fact that the company's producing properties are confined to a relatively small area, the common stock contains a substantial element of speculation. That is why you are able to get it on an 8 per cent basis.

[*Continued on page* 124]

8 TESTS That Prove the Safety of Every Investment YOURS - FREE

AT last there is available to every investor, whether large or small, a concise, scientific guide to making investments that may be relied upon to ensure the maximum of safety. Eight specific tests may be given to prove the safety of every investment. Unless an investment will pass every one of these 8 tests it is lacking in some element of safety. No person should invest money in any form of security without knowing and applying these eight tests.

Over a period of 38 years, George M. Forman and Company have handled the investments of thousands of individuals without the loss of a single dollar to any customer—this record could have been made only by the application of these tests to every investment. In a booklet, "How To Select Safe Bonds," you will find exactly what these 8 tests are and much additional information of interest in connection with your investments. You will find how you can still get an attractive yield with safety in the face of declining interest rates.

Mail Coupon for Book

Fill out and mail the coupon at once for this interesting booklet. There is no obligation. It will not only show you how to test every investment for safety, but will also give you information that will enable you to secure, with absolute safety, a larger income from your investment. Mail Coupon now.

GEORGE M. FORMAN & CO.
105 W. MONROE ST. CHICAGO
38 Years Without Loss to a Customer

GEORGE M. FORMAN & CO.
Dept. 198, 105 Monroe St.
Chicago, Illinois

Please mail me without cost or obligation a copy of your booklet "How to Select Safe Bonds." No solicitor is to call on me.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____

SELL US YOUR SPARE TIME

You can earn $15 to $50 a week writing show cards in your own home.—No canvassing.—A pleasant profitable profession easily and quickly learnt by our new simple graphic block system. Artistic ability not necessary.—We teach you how, and supply you with work—Distance no object. Full particulars and booklet free.
WILSON METHODS LIMITED—DEPT. H
64 East Richmond, Toronto, Canada.

8% on city and farm mortgages and bonds if purchased direct, thus saving agent's profit. Write us.
EDGERTON-FABRICK COMPANY
Dept. O, Pocatello, Idaho

Common Sense Says: Invest!

You Can Safely Get 7½%

Look at it any way you will, the only way for the average man to accumulate a fortune is to start saving in a modest way and then make his money work for him—as hard as he works for himself! Any wealthy man will tell you that the use you make of your money is far more important than what you earn.

Miller First Mortgage Bonds will keep your dollars hard at work, turning in 7½% interest, year after year. And nobody has ever lost a dollar in Miller Bonds. Many readers of this publication already consider themselves fortunate to own these securities. You can find out all about the bonds by mailing the coupon for a free booklet, "The Ideal Investment."

G. L. MILLER BOND & MORTGAGE COMPANY
408 Miller Bldg., Miami, Florida

Please send me, without obligation, the booklet, "The Ideal Investment," also illustrated circular describing a good bond issue paying 7½% —denominations of $100, $500, $1,000.

Name.....

Address.....

City and State.....

G. L. Miller
BOND & MORTGAGE
Company

Florida's Oldest First Mortgage Bond House
408 Miller Bldg., Miami, Florida

Midsummer Price Reductions

How To Save Up More Money For Your Vacation

Take your pick, now, of these seven most popular magazines published, while the special one-year subscription club-offers below make them genuine vacation bargains.

McClure's Magazine The People's Home Journal	3.40	McClure's Magazine American Magazine	4.90
McClure's Magazine McCall's Magazine	3.10	McClure's Magazine Review of Reviews	5.50
McClure's Magazine Pictorial Review	3.90	McClure's Magazine Harper's Magazine	5.90

(Above Prices Good for Vacation Period Only)

Send all orders to

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE, 80 Lafayette Street, New York, N. Y.

Try before you Buy
44 styles, colors and sizes in the famous Ranger line. Marvelous prices and terms. Shipped on approval and 30 DAYS' FREE TRIAL, *express prepaid.*
12 Months to Pay You can get immediate possession and use on our liberal Easy Payment plan.
Tires wheels, lamps, horns and equipment at half the usual prices. SEND NO MONEY, but write for our wonderful offer.
Mead Cycle Company Dept. C 32 Chicago
Write us today for free catalog

Comfort Baby's Skin With Cuticura Soap And Fragrant Talcum

For sample Cuticura Talcum, a fascinating fragrance, Address Cuticura Laboratories, Dept. D, Malden, Mass.

McClure's Financial Booklet

Tenth Edition

This Financial Booklet is intended for McClure readers who wish general information about financial, insurance and investment subjects. Many readers have written that it is invaluable to them. Requests for this booklet during the past year have assumed such proportions that the Financial Department is obliged to charge a nominal sum of 35 cents a copy to partially cover the cost of printing and mailing. This book will enable you to avoid many of the pitfalls that a new investor is apt to encounter.

Partial List of Contents

How the Financial Swindler Works
How to Avoid Worthless Stocks
Safe Investments for Little Sums
Safe Investments for Larger Sums
How to Choose a Broker
How to Send Money to a Broker
List of Sound Bonds
Six Per Cent and Safety
Bonds, Stocks and Mortgages
List of Sound Stocks
A Safe Plan for Buying Stocks on Margin
The Partial Payment Plan
Investments Readily Convertible into Cash
How Big Investors Place Their Funds
How to Analyze a Bond
How to Care for Securities and Prevent Their Loss and Destruction
How to Figure the Real Return on Your Money
First Principles of Life Insurance
Investment Opportunities of the War.

Booklet will be sent for 35 cents in stamps. Address all communications to McClure Financial and Insurance Department, 80 Lafayette St., New York.

Financial Questions and Answers

[*Continued from page* 123]

Q. Please tell me, in addition to sending me your financial booklet, whether or not you consider it safe to buy stocks on the partial payment plan?

A. It is almost as safe to buy stocks on the partial payment plan as it is to buy them outright, if certain vital precautions are taken. Do not open an account with a broker or house that is not thoroughly reliable or with any of the multitude of so-called brokers who flit about the country, making short, but profitable stops at the expense of persons who are at heart investors, but who by force of circumstances have become speculators.

Select only stocks that have a good dividend record and good prospects; the stocks of companies that are engaged in essential industries. Do not commit yourself to the purchase of more stock than you can conveniently carry, making due allowance for those contingencies that may cut into your available income. Start with an initial payment large enough to protect you in the event of a material break in the price of the stock being purchased, thus minimizing the danger of being wiped out for want of sufficient margin.

Many of the most active dividend-paying stocks are now selling from ten to twenty points under the high level of the recent forward movement. Take into account the status of the stock market at the time you open your account. If, as at present, the stocks are at or near the peak of a long upward movement proceed cautiously, making your initial payment no smaller than 25 per cent of the market value of the security being purchased. Remember that after a long upward swing in stocks the chances of loss outweigh the chances of profit.

Q. I will thank you for your opinion of United States Tobacco Company's stock as an investment and any information you may give me will be highly appreciated. What is its par value?

A. United States Tobacco Company common stock has no par value. Last year four shares of this stock were issued for every one share of the old $100 par value common stock, and the new stock has been placed on a $3 a year dividend basis. This company has a good dividend record. After making handsome payments to stockholders the company has for several years returned a substantial amount to surplus. The company is in good financial condition and has the advantage of stability of earnings in good times and bad. The stock would make a suitable investment for a part of your funds.

[All inquiries receive prompt and careful attention. Correspondence is treated as confidential and is answered by Mail. Questions relating to subjects of general interest will be published each month. Address, Financial Editor McCLURE'S *Magazine, 80 Lafayette St., New York City.]*

Investment Literature

[If you do not care to order these booklets direct we shall be glad to have them sent to you. Kindly order by Number]

1. S. W. Straus & Company, 565 Fifth Avenue, New York City, will be glad to send on request their new booklet "Charting Hidden Treasure." This booklet contains tables that will help you build an income.
2. The G. L. Miller Bond & Mortgage Company of Miami, Florida, are publishers of "The Ideal Investment," a financial book which describes the character of first mortgage real estate bonds, and indicates how high-grade bonds which are secured by real estate are protected against loss. A copy of this book will be mailed free and without obligation, upon request.
3. "How to Select Safe Bonds" is a booklet that has recently been published by George M. Forman & Company, 105 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois. Send for this booklet.

The Black Gang

[*Continued from page* 121]

and the sergeant-major, with a voice like a bull, would bellow:

" 'Should the ruling classes have money?'

"Then they answered in unison: 'No.'

" 'Should any one have money?' Again they answered, 'No.'

" 'Should every one work for the common good for love?' 'Yes.'

"Whereat he would roar: 'Well, in this 'ere island there ain't no ruling classes, and there ain't no money, and there's dam' little love, so go and plant more potatoes, you lop-eared sons of Beelzebub.'

"At which point the parade broke up in disorder."

Sir John was shaking helplessly.

"This is a jest, Johnstone. You're joking."

"I'm not," answered the other. "But I think you'll admit that the man who started the whole show—the leader of the Black Gang—is a humorist, to put it mildly, who cannot well be spared."

"My dear fellow, as I said before, the Cabinet is the only place for him. If only he'd export two or three of my colleagues to this island and let 'em plant potatoes I'd take off my hat to him. Do I know him?"

Sir Bryan smiled.

"I'm not certain: you may. But the point, Haverton, is this: We must take cognizance of the whole thing, if we acknowledge it at all. Therefore, shall we assume that everything I have been telling you is a fairy story: that the Black Gang is non-existent—I may say that it will be shortly—and that what has already appeared in the papers is just a hoax by some irresponsible person? Unless we do that there will be a *cause célebrè* fought out on class prejudice—a most injudicious thing at the present moment. I may say that the island is shut down, and the sixty pioneers have departed to other countries. Also, quite a number of those agents whose names are on the list you have have left our shores during the past few days. It is merely up to us to see that they don't come back. But nothing has come out in the papers: and I don't want anything to come out, either."

He paused suddenly, as a cheerful voice was heard in the office outside.

"Ah, here is one Captain Drummond, whom I asked to come around this morning," he continued, with a faint smile. "I wonder if you know him."

"Drummond?" repeated the other. "Is he a vast fellow with an ugly face?"

"That's the man," said Sir Bryan.

"I've seen him at his aunt's—old Lady Meltrose. She says he's the biggest fool in London."

Sir Bryan's smile grew more pronounced as the door opened and Hugh came in.

"Morning, Tum-tum," he boomed genially. "How's the liver and all that?"

"Morning, Hugh. Do you know Sir John Haverton?"

"Morning, Sir John. Jolly old Cabinet merry and bright? Or did you all go down on Purple Polly at Goodwood yesterday?"

Sir John rose a little grimly.

"We have other things to do besides backing horses, Captain Drummond. I think we have met at Lady Meltrose's, haven't we?"

"More than likely," said Hugh affably. "I don't often dine there: she ropes in such a ghastly crowd of bores, don't you know."

"I feel sure, Captain Drummond, that

[*Continued on page* 126]

"B.V.D."

Shows the Way to Comfort

The Label Shows the Way to "B.V.D."

THERE is only one "B.V.D.," the Underwear that first introduced coolness and comfort into men's summer dress. The "B.V.D." Red Woven Label assures the purchaser the Unvarying Quality, Long Wear and Famous Fit of "B.V.D." Underwear.

From raw material to finished product we practice ceaseless care so that every "B.V.D." garment is of the quality that has brought world-wide preference for our product.

The cool, durable nainsook of "B.V.D." is woven in our own mills from selected cotton and finished in our bleachery.

In our factories vigilant inspection guards every process of skillful cutting, sturdy stitching, well sewn buttons and accurate finish.

There is only one "B.V.D." Underwear
It is always identified by this Red Woven Label

Union Suits
(Pat. U. S. A.)
Men's $1.50 and upward
the suit
Youths' 85c the suit

MADE FOR THE
B.V.D.
BEST RETAIL TRADE
(Trade Mark Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. and Foreign Countries)

Undershirts and
Drawers
85c and upward
the garment

The B.V.D. COMPANY, Inc., New York
Sole Makers of "B.V.D." Underwear

©1923
The B.V.D. Co., Inc.

"NEXT TO MYSELF I LIKE B.V.D. BEST"

Just the Tonic Americans Need!!!

"GREAT-HEART"

Many Intimate Photographs

Life Story of **Theodore Roosevelt**

Written by Daniel Henderson, with an introduction by Roosevelt's close comrade, Major-General Leonard Wood, U.S.A.

NOW, right now, American manhood needs the dynamic spirit of T. R. as never before to guide it and inspire it on through these reviving days of reconstruction.

From each of these 242 vivid pages you hear Teddy's intense Americanism speaking right out to your own spirit.

In each of the 18 chapters in "Great-Heart" you watch Roosevelt the boy, or Roosevelt the Commissioner, Roosevelt the Governor, Roosevelt the President, Roosevelt the man of the world, or Roosevelt the father of an American home solving just such human problems as are daily confronting yourself.

From his doctrine all through the book of "The Life of Strife" to "Get Action; do things; be sane," you take increased strength; his electrifying energy leaps from these pages and adds to your own.

Mail in this coupon, now, and receive "Great-Heart" at once, to take along as the book for your vacation. "Great-Heart" is just the incentive you will need to bring you back renewed and reinspired to live your life with full force.

McCLURE'S Book Dept., 80 Lafayette St., New York, N. Y.

Please send me "Great-Heart": The Life Story of Theodore Roosevelt. I enclose $1.00 in payment. If I do not like the book upon receipt of it, I agree to return it in five days and you agree to refund my money.

Name.....

Address.....

....., Mc 8-23

She Found A Pleasant Way To Reduce Her Fat

She did not have to go to the trouble of diet or exercise. She found a better way, which aids the digestive organs to turn food into muscle, bone and sinew instead of fat.

She used *Marmola Prescription Tablets*, which are made from the famous Marmola prescription. They aid the digestive system to obtain the full nutriment of food. They will allow you to eat many kinds of food without the necessity of dieting or exercising.

Thousands have found that *Marmola Prescription Tablets* give complete relief from obesity. And when the accumulation of fat is checked, reduction to normal, healthy weight soon follows.

All good drug stores the world over sell *Marmola Prescription Tablets* at one dollar a box. Ask your druggist for them, or order direct and they will be sent in plain wrapper, postpaid.

MARMOLA COMPANY

253 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

HOTEL ST. JAMES

TIMES SQUARE :: NEW YORK CITY

Just off Broadway at 109-113 West 45th Street

An hotel of quiet dignity, having the atmosphere and appointments of a well conditioned home. 40 theatres, all principal shops and churches, 3 to 5 minutes' walk.

Send Postal for Rates and Booklet

W. JOHNSON QUINN, President.

DEAFNESS IS MISERY

I know because I was Deaf and had **Head Noises** for over 30 years. My invisible Antiseptic Ear Drums restored my hearing and stopped Head Noises, and will do it for you. They are Tiny Megaphones. Cannot be seen when worn. Effective when Deafness is caused by Catarrh or by Perforated, Partially or Wholly Destroyed Natural Drums. Easy to put in, easy to take out. Are "Unseen Comforts." Inexpensive. Write for Booklet and **my sworn statement** of how I recovered my hearing.

A. O. LEONARD

Suite 237, 70 5th Avenue - - New York City

High School Course in 2 Years

You can complete this simplified High School Course at home inside two years. Meets all requirements for entrance to college and the leading professions. This and thirty-six other practical courses are described in our Free Bulletin. Send for it TODAY.

AMERICAN SCHOOL

Dept. HC-56 Drexel Av. & 58th St. © A.S. 1923 CHICAGO

Clark's 4th Round the World Cruise

From N. Y. Jan. 15th, Westward, by specially chartered new Cunarder "Laconia," 20,000 tons (oil burning), 4 mos. $1000 up including hotels, guides, drives, fees. Stop overs in Europe. Visiting Panama Canal, Los Angeles, 18 days Japan and China, Java, Cairo, Jerusalem, Athens, option 18 days in India; Europe, etc.

CLARK'S 21st MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE Feb. 2, specially chartered White Star S. S. "Baltic," 65 days, 18 days Palestine and Egypt. $600 up, including drives, guides, hotels, fees.

F. C. CLARK Times Building New York

The Black Gang

[*Continued from page* 125]

you're an admirable judge." Sir John turned to Sir Bryan Johnstone and held out his hand. "Well, I must be off. Good-morning, Johnstone—and you've thoroughly roused my curiosity. I'd very much like to know who the gentleman is whom we've been discussing. And in the meantime I'll look through these papers and let you know my decision in due course."

He bustled out of the office, and Hugh sank into a chair with a sigh of relief.

"The old boy's clothes seem full of body this morning, Tum-tum," he remarked, as the door closed. "Indigestion—or don't the elastic-sided boots fit?"

"Do you know what we have been discussing, Hugh?" said the other quietly.

"Not an earthly, old man. Was it that new one about the girl in the grocer's shop?"

"We've been discussing the leader of the Black Gang," said Sir Bryan, with his eyes fixed on the man opposite him.

Not by the twitch of a muscle did Drummond's face change: he seemed engrossed in the task of selecting a cigarette.

"You've been in Deauville, haven't you, Hugh—the last few days?"

"Quite right, old man."

"You don't know that a burglary has taken place at your house in London?"

"A BURGLARY!" Drummond sat up with a jerk. "Why hasn't Denny told me?"

"A very small one," said Sir Bryan, "committed by myself, and perhaps he doesn't know. I took—your typewriter."

For a few moments Hugh Drummond stared at him in silence: then his lips began to twitch.

"I see," he said at length. "I meant to have that defective 's' repaired."

"You took me in, old boy," continued Sir Bryan, "utterly and absolutely. If it hadn't been for one of the men at Maybrick Hall turning king's evidence, I don't believe I should have found out now."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked Drummond after a pause.

"Nothing. I was discussing the matter with Sir John this morning, and we both agreed that you either deserved penal servitude or a seat in the Cabinet. And since neither course commends itself to us, we have decided to do nothing. There are reasons, which you will appreciate, against any publicity at the moment. But, Hugh, the Black Gang must cease."

Drummond nodded.

"Carried, *nem. con.*, Tum-tum. It shall automatically dissolve to-day."

"And further," continued Sir Bryan, "will you relieve my curiosity and tell me what sent Charles Latter mad?"

"I did," said Drummond grimly, "as I told that ass McIver over a cocktail at the Regency. He was plotting to blow up three thousand men's employment, Tum-tum, with gun cotton. It was at his instigation that four men were killed in Manchester as the result of another outrage. So I lashed him to his bed, and underneath him I put what he thought was a slab of gun cotton, with fuse attached. It wasn't gun cotton: it was wood. But he went mad." He paused for a moment, and then continued: "Now, one for you. Why did you let Peterson escape?"

"How did you know he had escaped?"

Hugh felt in his pocket and produced a note.

"Read it," he said, passing it across the desk.

"It was a pity you forgot that there might be another key to the padlock, Captain Drummond," it ran. "And Giuseppi is an old friend of mine. I enjoyed our single."

Sir Bryan returned the note without a word, and Drummond folded it slowly.

"That's twice," he said quietly, and suddenly the Director of Criminal Investigation, than whom no shrewder judge of men lived, saw and understood the real Drummond below the surface of inanity—the real Drummond, cool, resourceful, and inflexible of will.

"That's twice," he repeated, still in the same quiet tone. "Next time—I win."

"But no more Black Gang, Hugh," said the other warningly.

Drummond waved a huge hand. "I have spoken, Tum-tum. A rose by any other name perhaps—but no more Black Gang." He rose and grinned at his friend. "It's deuced good of you, old man, and all that——"

The eyes of the two men met.

"If it was found out, I should be looking for another job," remarked Sir Bryan dryly. "And perhaps I should not get the two thousand pounds which I understand the widow of the late-lamented Ginger Martin has received anonymously."

"Shut up," said Drummond awkwardly.

"Delighted, old man," returned the other. "But the police in that district are demanding more pay. She has been drunk and disorderly five times in the last week."

TO those strong-minded individuals who habitually read the entrancing chit-chat of Mrs. Tattle in *The Daily Sentinel* there appeared the following morning a delightful description of the last big fancy-dress ball of the season held at the Albert Hall the preceding night.

"Halfway through the evening," she wrote in conclusion, "just as I was consuming an ice in one hand with the Duchess of Sussex, and nibbling the last of the asparagus in the other with the Princess of Montevideo, tastefully disguised as an umbrella stand, we were treated to the thrill of the evening. It seemed as if suddenly there sprang up all around the room a mass of mysterious figures clothed from head to foot in black. The dear Princess grew quite hysterical, and began to wonder if it was a 'hold up' as she so graphically described it.

"Whispers of the mysterious Black Gang were heard on all sides, but we were soon reassured. Belovd'st, they all carried champagne bottles! Wasn't it too, too thrilling! And after a while they all formed up in a row, and at a word from the leader—a huge man, my dears, puffectly 'uge—they discharged the corks in a volley at one of the boxes, which sheltered no less than two celebrities—Sir Bryan Johnstone, the chief of all the policeman, and Sir John Haverton, the Home Secretary. Loud sounds of revelry and mirth were heard proceeding from the box, and going a little later to powder my nose I distinctly saw Sir John being taught the intricacies of the fox-trot by the huge man in the passage. But then, anything can happen at an Albert Hall ball, especially at the end of the season."

THE END

Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

[*Continued from page 29*]

I'll swear to the warrant before Justice Mackey at once."

"Why, you don't need no warrant," says I. "If you want Royal arrested, I reckon I'll arrest him. Be glad to."

"Oh, coming to your senses, are you?" Brower asks, still mopping trickles of blood. "It's about time. Well, take him to the jail and lock him up."

I turned to Royal.

"Now look here, Selden," says I. "I'm going to arrest you and that's all there be to it. You know I get 'em when I go after 'em, don't you?"

"All right, Mr. Tom Hill," he says, slowly. "I'll go along peaceable."

"You lock him up securely, Hill," Brower calls as we walk away.

"I'll double-lock the door," says I.

"What's the big idea, Mr. Tom Hill?" Royal asks, when we are out of earshot. "Why are you so ready to put me behind the bars?"

"You was bound to go behind the bars," says I. "It's better to be arrested on an assault and battery charge than on a charge of murder, ain't it?"

"Oh, I don't know. It means a cell for the night."

"For a bright young man you are dumb about some things," says I. "If them fellers had wanted you held for murder, I'd have had to hold you. If I hadn't done it, Brower would have. And murder is a serious charge."

When we got to the town hall I opened the door of the only cell, which was in the basement. This cell was mostly used by tramps that appealed to me for lodging for the night, and it wasn't any too attractive a place. Floor, ceiling, and three sides were of concrete and the front of heavy bars. It was damp and smelly in there. I didn't blame Royal none for pulling back a little.

"You're in a mess, Royal," says I. "Now is the time to show you can stand the gaff."

I could feel the muscles in the arm I held go hard, and Royal pulled himself together and walked into the cell. I slammed the door so that it clanged with an ugly sound, and I could see Royal shiver.

Without a word I put out the electric light and went out, closing the outside door behind me.

"Mr. Tom Hill, you cussed old scoundrel, what do you think you're doing?" I heard Royal call after me.

I was acting in this way because I thought the lad needed a little shock to wake him up. He hadn't seemed to realize that he might find himself in a pretty tight hole.

I went up to my office and called up Justice Mackey and told him to hustle into his duds and come down to the jail. Mackey wasn't friendly to Brower and Brower's outfit and he was to me and Royal.

When Mackey arrived I led him downstairs and switched on the light again. Royal was clinging to the bars, looking between them with his face as black as night. He was all ready, I knowed, to bust out cussing me. But at sight of Mackey his face cleared up.

"Oh," he says, "I see, Mr. Tom Hill."

"Do you, though?" says I. "Well, that's most surprisin'. You are a lot more intelligent than you was a bit ago."

[*Continued on page 128*]

Is It True?

Has Modern Science found God? And does the discovery mean that henceforth men and women may be the things they want to be, possess the things they desire, and achieve the things they wish to achieve?

IN a recent popular lecture on "The Wonders of Science," Dr. Hilton I. Jones, the well-known American scientist, said that thought is a radiant force of the same general nature as radiant forces of light and heat. He reviewed and demonstrated a great mass of scientific work and discovery, and concluded his lecture in substantially these words:

"And at the end of all this work and research Modern Science has found God—the All-Wise and Almighty Creative Presence and Power which fills the universe, indwells in everything, and manifests in each creature to the limit of the creature's capacity for His manifestation."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It means that the part of the human mind usually called the "unconscious," or "subconscious," is nothing less than an indwelling of God—"the Father within you" to which Jesus sometimes referred. The branch of modern science called Practical Psychology announced the same thing several years ago, and has worked out simple methods whereby one may draw upon the God-Self within him for the fulfillment of every desire of his heart. He can heal his diseases, vastly increase his income, be the things he wants to be, possess the things he desires, and achieve the things he wishes to achieve. We have the written proof that many men and women have actually accomplished these very things—a great mass of written proof.

Judge Daniel A. Simmons, the well-known jurist, author and practical psychologist, has introduced many thousands of people to their indwelling God-Selves, and has thus enabled them to accomplish the marvelous things we have enumerated. These introductions were effected through a reading of the judge's personal message entitled "REALIZATION," a copy of which we will send free and postpaid to any one who will fill out and send to us the coupon at the bottom of this column.

The Realization System of Practical Psychology
Jacksonville, Florida

The Realization System,
Jacksonville, Fla.

I accept your offer to send me, free and post paid, a copy of Judge Simmons' message, entitled "Realization."

Name.....

Street.....

City..... State.....

MeC-8-23

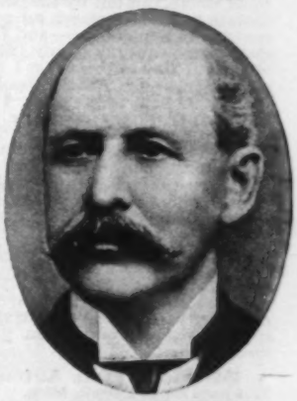
PATENTS If you have an invention write for our Guide Book, "How to Get a Patent." Send model or sketch and description and we will give our opinion as to its patentable nature. RANDOLPH & CO., Dept. 50, WASHINGTON, D. C.

PATENTS Inventors should write for free Guide Book & "Record of Invention Blank" before disclosing their inventions. Send model or sketch and description of invention for our free opinion of its patentable nature. Reasonable terms. Prompt attention. Victor J. Evans & Co., 750 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

W. L. DOUGLAS

SHOES ARE MADE BY SKILLED SHOEMAKERS

We have in our 116 stores a wonderful assortment of kinds and styles of high-class, stylish shoes suitable for Men, Women and Boys in all walks of life. They are made of high grade, selected leathers. Fine Calf and Vici Kid shoes are our specialty. The quality, style and workmanship are unsurpassed.



YOU CAN ALWAYS SAVE MONEY BY WEARING W. L. DOUGLAS SHOES SOLD DIRECT FROM FACTORY TO YOU AT ONE PROFIT

ESTABLISHED 1876

If you have been paying high prices for shoes, why not try a pair of W. L. Douglas $8.00 shoes? They are exceptionally good value. Frankly, is it not worth while for you to dress your feet in shoes that hold their shape, are easy-fitting, look well, wear well and are reasonable in price?

$5. $6. $7. $8. & $9. SHOES

$4.50 & $5.00 SHOES FOR BOYS

For thirty-seven years W. L. Douglas name and portrait have stood for a high standard of quality and dependable value. For economy and satisfactory service wear shoes that bear this trade mark. Ask your dealer for W. L. Douglas shoes. Look for W. L. Douglas name and the retail price stamped on the sole. Refuse substitutes.

IF NOT FOR SALE IN YOUR VICINITY, WRITE FOR ILLUSTRATED CATALOG SHOWING HOW TO ORDER SHOES BY MAIL. POSTAGE FREE.

W. L. Douglas
President
W. L. Douglas Shoe Co.
150 Spark Street, Brockton, Mass.

TO MERCHANTS: If no dealer in your town handles W. L. Douglas shoes, write today for exclusive rights to handle this quick-selling, quick turn-over line.

Weight Reduced by Safe Ethical Method

Remarkable new book —sent free—tells how it may be accomplished in your own home.

"THE latest discovery represents the ONLY way in which one should lose fat" says an eminent scientist, Member of the American Society for the Advancement of Science. For not only is it the most effective but it is also the easiest. The treatment, which anyone may easily apply at home, is so simple that it may be applied in ten seconds at bed time. And it then reduces during sleep. No sweating or anything discomforting. In fact, most people sleep better and awake more refreshed when this method is used. No more diet, exercise, electric rays, massage, special baths, creams, salts, thyroid extracts or drugs. The method is simplicity itself. Yet losses of a pound a day are easy accompanied by great increases in health. Sold on free inspection. Method explained in remarkable book entitled: "Sleep It Away." Sent FREE and without obligation. Write

BEAUTY SCIENCE INSTITUTE
Dept. A
COLUMBUS, OHIO

I Made Hardly Enough to Support My Family

When I think back to this time last year and recall that I was then making barely enough for my family to live on, I can hardly realize that my present salary of $400 a month is not just a pleasant dream.

A year ago I was what you might call a "jack-of-all-trades and master of none." Today I am a trained automobile man, holding down the job of foreman in the town's main garage—and all because I made a study of automobiles in my spare time at night after work.

I first learned about the Home Study Automobile Course, put out by the Michigan State Automobile School, through an advertisement I saw one day in a magazine—and I have never been so glad over anything in my life as over answering that ad. The information I received in reply to my letter to the Auto School opened up an entirely new field to me. For I had never realized how much money could be made in the automobile business—and how many good-paying jobs were open in it for trained men.

The information which I received is all contained in a Free Book which the Michigan State Automobile School will be glad to send you upon request—together with a 100-page Catalog of the mammoth school in Detroit to which students come from all parts of the country. Send for the FREE Book and Catalog, as I did, and find out how easy it is for you to get into the $400-a-month class like myself, and thousands of other young fellows like me—by just studying about automobiles in your spare time at home. Write today.

Michigan State Automobile School
3228 Auto Bldg., Detroit, Mich. (The Auto Center)

Blistered, sunburnt skin made soft and smooth by promptly applying antiseptic, healing

Mentholatum

Write for free sample

Mentholatum Co., Buffalo, N.Y., Wichita, Kans.

When answering advertisements please mention McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

[*Continued from page* 127]

Ten minutes later I was sitting out in front of the jail, smoking my pipe, contented as I always like to be. Up speeds Morehouse's big car. Down jumps Brower, Oldham, and Morehouse.

"Ah," says Brower, "you are standing guard over him, are you? It's about time you woke up to the seriousness of this matter. Open the door. We want to talk to him."

"Talk to who?" says I.

"To Selden, of course, you old bonehead," says Brower, who was mad clean through because his nose was swelled and sore.

I LIFTED my two hundred and something pounds out of the old armchair.

"Brower," I says, "you can put that kind of talk away for good and all. I don't stand for it." 'Tain't often I get hot, but when I do I'm pretty hot. I moved up to Brower. "If I paste you," says I, "I'll bust you wide open. You keep them names for people that will stand for 'em. Mr. Tom Hill don't stand for 'em from you nor nobody else!"

"There, there," Morehouse breaks in, "he was hasty, Mr. Tom Hill."

"Yeh, he was breaking the speed limit and that's against the law," says I. "Let him hesh his mouth."

I set down again and looked up at the moon, my hands folded across my stomach. I guessed my play was to be what they call complacent.

"Open the door, Hill. We want to talk to Selden," says Morehouse.

I got up and unlocked the door and switched on the light. They went in and started for the cell. Then they stopped, bunched up together.

"Why—why, he ain't here!" Brower sputters.

"No," says I, "he is elsewhere."

"Where else?" says Morehouse, harsh.

"Danged if I know," says I. "He went away in his Lizzie about ten minutes before you showed up—or five minutes, may be."

"You let him go?" Brower demands.

"It looks like it," says I. "I could have kept him if I'd wanted to. I had him behind the bars once."

"Do you mean to say you released a man charged with murder?" Brower explodes.

"I don't mean to say nothing that is a forty-second cousin to any statement like that," says I. "You told me to lock Mr. Selden up on a charge of assault and battery and I done it, as the book will show. Assault and battery is a bailable offense. Mr. Selden made bond."

"Before whom?" says Morehouse.

"Mackey," says I.

"Who went on his bond?"

"I did."

"You did?" Brower wheezes. "You, an officer of the law, went on a murderer's bond! Of all outrageous proceedings!"

"I'm a property owner, payin' town, county, and state taxes," says I. "Mackey seemed to think my bond was good."

"Which way did he go?" says Morehouse.

"Drove off toward his house," says I.

"You come with us, Hill," says Brower. "I'll make you answer for releasing a murderer," says he.

"Releasing an assault and batteryer," says I. "If you want to be honest for once, you'd admit that to be the fact."

"Pooh!" says Brower.

"Pooh, yourself!" says I, and I followed them out to the car.

We drove posthaste, like they say, to Royal's home. Brower run around to the old barn where Royal kept his car.

"Car's there," he says. "Knock on the door, Hill."

"Knock on the door your own self," says I. "You're the best knocker in town."

He give me a dark look, but he knocked. After a while Royal's landlady, Mrs. Walden, opened the door. Brower said he wanted to see Royal.

"He ain't in," says Mrs. Walden, for she was friendly to Royal and knowed he wasn't friendly to Brower.

"His car is in the barn," says Brower.

"I know it," Mrs. Walden says. "He put it in there a bit ago. I was lyin' awake and heard him. Then I heard him go off down the street, walking fast."

"Ought we to search the house?" says Brower to Morehouse.

"Mebbe you ought, but you won't," says Mrs. Walden.

"We can take her word," Morehouse says.

"Well, we will search the town," says Brower. "He is a fugitive now." He turns on me. "Hill," he says, "you will come with us. From now on you will give your whole time to the solving of this mystery."

"Right this minute I'm going home," says I, and I left 'em. For one thing I wanted a pot of coffee and I also had a notion I would get a phone call before dawn.

THE coffee had just about started to bubble when the phone rang. 'Twas Royal and he asked me how the land lay.

"All right," says I. "Come on over. I want to talk to you."

"All right," he says, "I'll be over."

When he come in a few minutes later, I told him what had happened.

"Yeh," he says, "they're out to get me. They are venomous."

"They are after your hide," says I. "Brower has always hated you and he has taken advantage of these circumstances."

"What did you want to talk to me about?" he asks.

"Look here," says I, "what kind of a shot are you, son?"

"Shot?" he asks. "Why, I'm accounted one of the best in our gun club."

"You can shoot straight with a pistol?"

"Say, Mr. Tom Hill," he busts out, "are you trying to discover whether I am a good enough shot to have plugged Willie Morehouse?"

"You dang fool!" I says, pouring coffee. "I'm trying to find out if anybody could have shot Willie, when Willie was driving, as he generally did, at sixty miles or so an hour."

"Oh, not sixty miles," Royal says. "That was just talk. About forty miles was what he generally hit when the road was clear."

"Well, if Willie was going at forty miles, could a man put a bullet into his heart from the roadside?"

"A man could stand at the roadside and shoot at Willie," Royal said. "If he put a bullet into Willie's heart, it would be because he was lucky—or unlucky, however you want to look at it."

"He couldn't stand there and say to himself he was going to shoot Willie through the heart—and then do it, eh?" says I.

"He could say it and he could do it, but it would be a chance shot," Royal answers. "The bullet would have to go some place after it left the gun. It *might* go into Willie Morehouse's heart."

"But the chances would be that it wouldn't?" says I.

"The chances would be about ninety to one that it wouldn't," Royal agrees.

"Then," says I, "Willie wasn't driving fast or whoever shot him didn't shoot him from the roadside."

"He might have been standing still. Somebody else——" Royal stopped short, his eyes bunging out.

"Somebody else might have been with him," says I, catching on.

"No, no!" he breaks out. "Nobody else was with him. That's certain. He was alone. Yes, he must have been alone."

I poured out some more coffee and Royal gulped down his cupful. The two of us was full of the same startling notion that the Moore girl might have been in the car with Willie.

"Look, here, Royal," says I, "we got to face every angle of this thing."

"Don't you bring Miss Moore's name in, Mr. Tom Hill," Royal blurts out. "She wasn't in the car with Morehouse. She couldn't have been there!"

"How do you know she wasn't there?" I asks.

"I'll call her up," he says, and he goes to the phone and rings old Mike's number.

Mike himself answered the call, I gathered, and he asked a lot of questions before he would consent to call the girl to the phone. Then Royal says:

"Alice, was you out in Willie Morehouse's car tonight?" There was a pause and then he says: "But it's important. It isn't idle curiosity on my part. Yes, you have a right to go out with whomever you please." Another pause. I could see Royal's fingers tighten on the receiver. "You were? What time did you leave him and where? That's all, thanks. Good-by."

He hung up the receiver, to stop any questions from her, I judged. For a minute he stood leaning his head against the wall. Then he straightened up and turned around to me, and his face was white.

"She was with him, all right," he says grimly.

[*To be continued in the September issue*]

The Island of Lost Pearls

[*Continued from page* 17]

the Chinaman's gigantic struggling frame.

He managed to free a hand and get a strangle hold upon the thick, yellow throat. Wong bit like a savage dog and the pain of the scrunching bones numbed Coverdale's forearm.

As they threshed across the rock-strewn sand he felt the spouting of warm blood upon his neck. His foot slipped; he swore feebly at his ebbing strength. Wong's hot breath fanned his cheek triumphantly. A vicious stomach kick brought a groan of agony to Coverdale's lips. It was the beginning of the end! Next instant Wong had him down, scrambling, fighting, but inexorably pinned.

With a grin of terrible ferocity, Wong retrieved the knife. It poised, turned, flashed in the sun—— And then, close at hand, a Gatling gun seemed to go off. As in a dream, Coverdale felt Wong grunt and shudder. The overwhelming weight crushing his body relaxed—slid away.

He caught a kaleidoscopic glimpse of the girl, white-faced and horrified, holding a smoking automatic rigidly before her. He smiled, tried to force his swollen tongue to speak; and then slipped away upon an avalanche of black oblivion——

CAPTAIN ISBISTER, the gaunt skipper of the *Jason* was a man of few words. When, on the following day, the exhausted girl, supporting a delirious, fever-stricken Coverdale, appeared upon the beach, he took them on board without asking superfluous questions, and at once set sail.

But as they plied on toward Roebuck Bay he remarked laconically to the mate, "Yon Portugoose has gone back to the devil, I'm thinking!"

Three nights later the schooner was nosing a crisp six knots through the moon-dappled waters off Cape Lévêque. Coverdale, convalescent, lay contentedly in a cane lounge upon the shadowed quarter deck, his arm around the girl's slim shoulders.

Captain Isbister, coughing discreetly, came up from below.

"I'm no after judging ye, Mr. Coverdale," he said brusquely, "an' from the tale ye blathered in your deleerium, I hae no doot yon black Portugoose got his deserts. But there's a puzzling point I'd like ye to clear up—what was in yon cave?"

For a moment Coverdale was silent. Then, in a low, intense voice, he said:

"I don't know; I never saw it. But it killed my partner, Sampson. I found him one afternoon, lying at the cave mouth—bloated, dying——" He broke off, shuddering. "And if you don't mind, I'd rather not talk about that part of it! After three months' searching, poor Sampson had stumbled on De Groot's two-hundred-year-old hoard. He was clutching six pearls in his shattered right hand; the *thing*—whatever it was—must have caught him just as he was almost out. A few moments before he died, he opened his eyes and croaked, 'Thousands of eyes—claws—red-hot pincers—God! It's got me!' "

Dead silence followed—broken only by the hiss of water creaming under the counter.

"I'm thinking," Captain Isbister said, composedly, at last, "it was maybe a giant tarantula. I've heard tell of them in Timor. It——"

"Oh, please!" the girl implored.

"Ah, weel," agreed the gaunt skipper, "perhaps it's no a ceevilized subject. And what did ye do with the pearls?"

Coverdale's lounge creaked in the semi-gloom; he fumbled with something which clicked metallically.

"I had a special cavity fitted in my automatic for them," he explained. "Six of them. One was stolen by our Jap boy in Nepenthe; Gonsalez got the other in Song-Li's doss house."

He paused and turned to Beryl, smiling almost shyly, as he dropped the stones in a glittering heap in her lap.

"They are yours," he said. "Four pearls, worth a king's ransom, perhaps—but I have a new one now"—his arm tightened about her—"a pearl without price."

5-Room House $538

You can buy all the materials for a complete home direct from the manufacturer and save four profits on the lumber, millwork, hardware and labor.

6 Room House $710

This marvelously-priced bungalow contains many of the comforts and conveniences of a much larger home. The interior arrangement is remarkable in its results from the standpoint of utilizing space. Four different floor plans are described in the Aladdin Catalog No. 112.

$2471 buys this 7-Room Home

Story-and-a-Half Bungalow

Here is a beautiful California bungalow. Shingled walls and designed in both one-story and story-and-a-half floor plans. Latter contains four bedrooms.

This Dutch Colonial

Twelve Rooms **$1932**

This handsome home contains living-room 14 x 26 feet, library, hall, dining-room, pantry, kitchen, four bed-rooms, sewing-room, bath and five closets.

ALADDIN Houses Not Portable

All lumber cut to fit by Aladdin System (not portable). Proved savings of over 18% waste in lumber and up to 30% saving on labor. Aladdin Homes built everywhere. Satisfaction or money back.

Million Dollar Corporation Guaranty

Prices quoted include all lumber cut to fit, windows, doors, woodwork, glass, paints, hardware, nails, lath and roofing. Complete drawings and instructions. Many styles to choose from. Highest grade lumber for all interior woodwork, siding, and outside finish. Send today for money-saving Aladdin Catalog No. 112.

The ALADDIN Co., BAY CITY MICHIGAN

Also Mills and Offices at Wilmington, North Carolina; Portland, Oregon; and Toronto, Ontario

1,000 Persons Will Die Today —Many Before Their Time

Of the thousands who die from respiratory diseases, bronchitis, pneumonia, kidney diseases, tuberculosis, influenza, and intestinal disorders, a large proportion would not have died if they had been able to recognize early symptoms and had known how to treat themselves.

ALMOST always the persons who die before at least seventy or eighty years of age deliberately rob themselves of years of life. And the persons who do not enjoy good health throughout life almost always rob themselves of Nature's boon to mankind, which is perfect health.

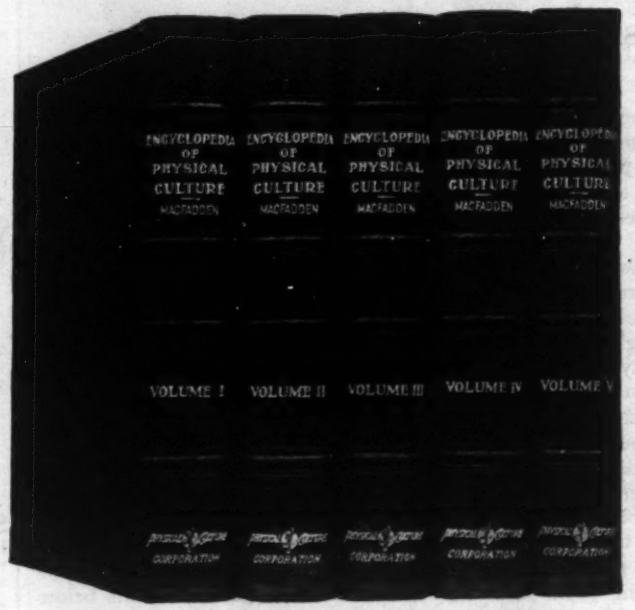
Nature always warns of impending sickness. The occasional headache, that tired, exhausted feeling, loss of appetite, a casual cold and other slight disarrangements are Nature's warnings to you that your body isn't functioning properly or that you are not living and eating correctly.

You can rule your health just as surely as you can rule your actions. If you are not enjoying perfect health today it is because you haven't employed the method provided by Nature to keep you well. If you don't know what her requirements are, you are sure to blunder into some kind of sickness—perhaps fatal disease.

How to Know Nature's Requirements, Her Laws for Health

Bernarr Macfadden's Encyclopedia of Physical Culture tells you how to build rugged health, vitality and strength. It gives invaluable information on fasting, diet, exercise, and hydropathy for both health and beauty building. It gives a thorough and extensive treatment on the laws of sex, the attainment of virile manhood and womanhood, and happy, successful parenthood, together with the details for the diagnosis and treatment of all sexual diseases. It contains many handsomely illustrated charts on anatomy and physiology.

Bernarr Macfadden has spent more than thirty years in guiding physical wrecks back to glorious health and strength. Out of this experience he has built his Encyclopedia of Physical Culture. It is comprehensive and complete in every sense—is neither dull nor technical—and you will easily understand every page and every word.



How to—

possess exhilarating health every day in the year
know your own body
eat for health
diet for the cure of disease
know the art of food preparation
build a powerful physique
correct physical imperfections
become a physical director
avoid unhappy marriages
avoid disease
fast as a curative measure
cure by hydropathy (heal by the use of water)
apply all methods of drugless healing
give first aid in emergencies
apply home treatment for disease
recognize diseases by manifestations
build nervous energy
treat the common forms of disease
understand the process of reproduction
benefit by laws of sex and marriage
treat disease of women
diagnose diseases
have healthy and vigorous children
treat female disorders
treat male disorders
obtain virility and manhood
care for the complexion
manicure; care for the hair and feet
cultivate the mind.

These are only a few of the matters explained in the Encyclopedia.

"Plain, sensible and priceless" writes one grateful owner

"I cannot express the wonderful value of these great books," writes one owner, "and feel they will lead me to a successful married life, as I have recently married. They are a plain, sensible and priceless guide to a perfect physical life."

Another owner writes: "I wish to thank Mr. Macfadden for his great work. The Encyclopedia is going to be my best doctor now and always."

What would it be worth to you to be able to instantly identify in its earliest stages any sickness or disease that might overtake you or any member of your family? To enjoy perfect health, almost complete freedom from sickness, doctor and hospital bills, and no days of suffering and worry, or salary lost through sickness.

FREE Examination of Any One Volume

Vol. 1. Anatomy, physiology, diet, food preparation.
Vol. 2. Physical training, gymnastics, corrective exercises, physical culture exercises for women, sports, athletics, beauty culture.
Vol. 3. Fasting, hydrotherapy, first aid, spinal manipulation, mechanical diet and regimens.
Vol. 4. Diagnosis and detailed treatment for individual diseases, alphabetically listed.
Vol 5. Sex hygiene, physiology, motherhood, pregnancy, maternity, baby-care, disorders of men and women.

You may have any one of these volumes that you select for five days personal examination. Just fill in and mail the coupon to us—or a letter or postcard will do—and we will immediately send the chosen volume to you.

Send No Money

Remember, you do not place yourself under any obligation, neither do you send any money in advance in order to have any volume you wish to examine sent to your home—the five days' examination is free.

After you have made your examination, if you decide that you want the Encyclopedia, just send us a deposit of only $2.00 and the other four volumes will be sent immediately to you, prepaid. Then, all that you pay is only $3.00 a month until you have paid the total cost of $35. for the full five volume set.

If you decide to pay all cash, just send only $31.50. But, of course, it isn't at all necessary to send all cash unless you really want to do so. We gladly extend the monthly payment plan to you.

With each purchase of the Encyclopedia we include a full year's subscription to PHYSICAL CULTURE Magazine—no matter which plan of payment is adopted.

If you are anxious to keep your present good health, or are eager to restore yourself to good health, you should at least examine one volume of this wonderful Encyclopedia. Sign and return the coupon today. You risk nothing, nor do you pay out one cent. Sign and return the coupon NOW.

MACFADDEN PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Dept. McC 8, Macfadden Bldg.,
1926 Broadway New York City
London Agent:
ATLAS PUBLISHING CO.
18 Bride Lane, London, E. C.

MACFADDEN PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Dept. McC 8, Macfadden Bldg.,
1926 Broadway, New York City

Send me for inspection Volume.....of the Encyclopedia of Physical Culture. I agree to return the volume in five days or pay $31.50 cash for the entire Encyclopedia, or $35 on the easy terms mentioned in this advertisement. If I accept the offer it also includes a year's subscription to "Physical Culture" Magazine.

Name.....
Occupation.....
Residence.....
Employed at.....
Business Address.....